

# Moscow angry at the Pope after Poland

by Luba George

Pope John Paul II returned to Rome June 15, following a week-long visit to his native Poland. This was his third visit there in eight years, and Poland's Soviet controllers were by no means happy with the outcome. From his first day in Warsaw on June 8, to the Eucharist procession to Zamkowy Square and farewell ceremony at the airport on June 14, the Pope's visit was a well-planned exercise in statesmanship, to counter the growing cultural pessimism afflicting Poland since 1981. The Pontiff's mission, elaborated in his speeches, was to uplift the population, especially the country's demoralized youth, as a means of ensuring Poland's survival as a nation. Let no one think Poland shall forever be a Soviet colony, was the thrust of his trip.

The key point came in Gdansk, the birthplace of the Solidarność trade union movement during the early 1980s. It was the first time the Communist authorities had allowed the Pope to travel there. Now, they are sorry.

On June 12, as the Pope prayed at a memorial to workers killed in 1970 anti-government riots, the police sealed off central Gdansk in a huge show of force to thwart any pro-Solidarity demonstrations. Thousands of police with clubs, backed by water cannons, blocked all streets around the monument, and turned back anyone trying to get near the site.

Wherever the Pope went, the recurring theme was *youth*, the future of Poland. In Gdansk, he said: "Everybody among you, young friends, finds in his life . . . a dimension of challenges to meet, a just cause to fight for, and one or another duty or obligation from which he cannot escape, or just run away. And finally, there is a certain order of truth and values that is worth keeping and defending."

The Pontiff called on the young to resist temptations like "alcoholism, drug abuse, sexual promiscuity, pornography, and religious sects." He warned all Poles, especially the young, to resist the temptation to abandon and flee their mother country out of hopelessness, to show courage and to fight for a "better and a more human world of truth, of freedom, of justice, and of love," and to work for the future of "their nation and society."

At Gdansk shipyards, a crowd of hundreds of thousands of Polish shipyard workers and fishermen, jammed into a waterfront park to hear the Pope bless Solidarity. In his ser-

mon, he spoke of the "dignity of man" and stressed that it was "legitimate" for Poles to fight peacefully for human rights. "A struggle for human rights and Man's rights, for his genuine progress, is in order. In the name of the future of mankind and humanity, the word 'solidarity' must be pronounced. . . . This word was uttered right here in a new way and in a new context. And the world cannot forget it." The sermon was received with tumultuous applause: the crowd repeatedly shouting "Long Live the Pope," and "Long Live Solidarity." After the speech, the Pope met with Lech Walęsa, the founder of the Solidarność movement.

## The Pope and Jaruzelski

Two emissaries from Polish leader Wojciech Jaruzelski met with the Pope in the wake of a major anti-government demonstration in Gdansk and the forceful statements by the Pope endorsing the outlawed Solidarity. Government spokesman Jerzy Urban betrayed Warsaw's and Moscow's nervousness and displeasure, saying: "Don't make a sensation out of this. This is a normal thing for state officials to meet with the Church."

Speaking in Lodz, the Pope proclaimed Poland's largest textile mill unsafe and denounced the Polish state for forcing mothers into factory jobs away from their children. Seeking to contain the "damage" done by his speech there, a hotbed of Solidarity activity in the past, the government refused to televise his visit.

In his farewell speech at the airport, Jaruzelski told the Pope that it would have been better to use the word solidarity in "defense of those who are continuing to suffer as a result of racism, neo-colonialism, unemployment, and intolerance." Solidarity leaders were quick to respond: "We don't live in a free country and our voices cannot be heard, and therefore, the Pope spoke about us and to us and—as he himself underlined—for us."

The Pope's visit was indeed a humiliating one for Jaruzelski. Not only did the Pope refuse to mention Soviet and Polish proposals for nuclear disarmament, all his speeches contained blunt anti-Soviet messages. Jaruzelski's survival depends on how long he can keep the lid on. He has been often referred to as the Soviets' "Poniatowski," a reference to the last king of Poland, placed on the throne by Russian Empress Catherine the Great in 1774 after the second partition of Poland. He attempted to rebuild an "independent strong Poland" while playing the part of an obedient satellite to Russia. After the Pope's visit, any credibility that existed for Jaruzelski's claim that Poland is destined to be subservient to the Soviet Empire has been shattered as a long-term prognosis.

Soviet foreign ministry spokesman Boris Pyadyshev, on June 12, was asked by journalists if the Pope would be allowed to visit the Soviet Lithuanian Republic to attend the 600th anniversary of its Christianization, to which he replied: "We have no intention of inviting the Pope to the Soviet Union."