

Poland's last chance

Poland's new prime minister, Tadeusz Mazowiecki of the Solidarnosc movement, was elected on Aug. 24 by an overwhelming vote of parliament. He is Poland's first non-Communist prime minister in 45 years. The election represents a potentially great hope for Poland and for mankind, but also marks Poland's last chance to avert a national tragedy whose ramifications, as in the Polish tragedy of 1939, will affect all of Western civilization.

The choice of prime minister is a fortunate one, for Mazowiecki is a man of great integrity, admired and respected by Solidarnosc leader Lech Walesa and by Pope John Paul II. The coming to power of the new government has unleashed an upsurge of hope in a nation which had been immersed in utter despair over its future. The present mood in Poland contrasts to that in the surrounding satellite states, where brutal crackdowns are under way in Czechoslovakia and East Germany.

Mazowiecki's Solidarnosc-led all-party government is Poland's only alternative to falling victim to a bloody Soviet invasion and a return to martial law and Stalinist suppression of Poland's patriots.

Indeed, Mazowiecki is keenly aware of the fine line he is walking. In a speech the day before his election was ratified, he went out of his way to assure Moscow and the Polish military and security forces that Poland will remain in the Warsaw Pact, and that the Communist Party will receive additional cabinet posts—besides those of Defense and Interior which they had already been promised.

How precarious and fragile Poland's present hope is, was spelled out by Robert Ribanszky, leader of the Hungarian Communist Party's Marxist Platform Group, in an interview with the West German weekly *Der Spiegel* published Aug. 21. He stressed that the "reform movement" in countries like Hungary and Poland is "out of step" with the moves toward a crackdown in the East bloc that are now in preparation. In reply to *Der Spiegel's* question whether Moscow would again, as in Hungary in 1956, send in the tanks, he replied: "Of course, the tanks can roll at any time!"

—Konstantin George

We must go fundamentally to basic economic infrastructure. This is true in Poland, it is true in the United States, when we have a major crash, a major depression on our hands, coming up now. Or in Mexico. Or in Brazil. Or in Argentina, or almost anywhere else. We have to concentrate on basic economic infrastructure.

That means, water management, for example.

In the United States, right now, that means, perhaps about \$500 billion in a NAWAPA water project, to save the water system of the United States. That will take a lot of people out of unemployment and put them to work in that.

That means generation and distribution of essential, basic power resources. That means, general transportation, like replacing half the bridges in the United States which are ready to play London Bridge All Fall Down, out of old age and obsolescence. That means improvement in communications. That means improved education. That means improvement in health care delivery, institutional health care, in particular, where we're really losing rapidly.

On top of this, we must increase agricultural yield per hectare, and per capita, and we must also increase manufacturing output per capita, per square kilometer on a global scale.

This is what's required inside Poland, inside Mexico, inside Argentina, inside Brazil, inside the ruined and bank-

rupt United States, too.

What will have to be done, will be to use the instrument of national banking in this sense. Governments must issue new currencies. These new currencies will be issued at discount by national banks. These currencies are loaned, not spent by the government directly, but loaned for infrastructure projects—not financing infrastructure projects, but to supply line-of-credit purchase of labor, materials, and so forth of these projects—line of credit supply to agricultural development, line-of-credit supply to manufacturing, line-of-credit supply backing for international trade.

On that foundation, we can move economies.

Poland's problem—and its great potential

Now, we come to a special factor, about Poland and the Soviet bloc in general. That is the final point I will take up here.

The basic problem, the basic failure in the Soviet system, is not merely Communism as such—not the way people in the West think. The Soviet system failed economically not because it's Communist vis-à-vis what is accepted as free enterprise economics in the West. That's not the key to the thing.

Obviously, what we have in the West right now is failing almost as badly as Communism is failing in the Soviet Empire