

FORUM SPECIAL FEATURE AND INTERVIEW

Solidarity and Poland's Turmoil: Anatomy of a Movement, Origins of a Revolution

In August 1980, a series of strikes spread across Poland as worker dissatisfaction with government economic policies came to a head. In the eighteen months since that summer, those first random strikes aimed at winning modest concessions in government economic policies have grown into a powerful, nation-wide movement which threatens to realign the basic structures of power and authority in Poland. Today that movement is known throughout the world as "Solidarity." The startling achievements of Solidarity, the changes it has wrought in political and economic life in Poland, and the way in which the Polish Communist party tries to resolve the dilemmas and contradictions posed by Solidarity's existence, all promise to have an enduring impact on the national and international scene.

This Special Feature combines an interview with Ewa-Teresa Eliaz Brantley, recently in Poland as an advisor to Solidarity, and an article by Dr. William E. Griffith, one of the West's foremost experts on Eastern Europe. In her interview, Brantley discusses Solidarity's statute (which she aided in drafting), reflects on the various events and personalities contributing to the formation of Solidarity, and gives an "inside" account of Solidarity's internal politics. In "Is Poland Not Yet Lost" Dr. Griffith examines the historical background of the current unrest in Poland, gives a detailed account of events from July 1980 to September 1981, and weighs the emerging balance of power among the Polish Communist party, the Polish Catholic church, and Solidarity.