Revolution: The Springtime of Two Nations

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In Poland and Hungary this has been a fantastic spring. As I travel through those countries, attending an opposition fête in Budapest, a triumphal mass in Gdansk, a Solidarity election meeting in a Silesian coal mine, I have to pinch myself to make sure I’m not dreaming. Walking around Budapest’s equivalent of Oxford Circus I pass a stall openly selling samizdat publications. Casting an eye over the titles I suddenly notice my own name, on what turns out to be a slim volume of essays hastily translated from *The New York Review*. Next day I am signing copies for people attending the opposition fête. “Incredible” and “surreal” are the words that punctuate every conversation about politics, though not about economics, for which the leitmotifs are, rather, “disastrous” and “hopeless.”

Last year, I posed the question of political change in these two countries as one of the historic choice “reform or revolution?”¹ But what is happening just now is a singular mixture of both reform and revolution: a “reform,” if you will, or perhaps a “revolution.” There is, in both places, a strong and essential element of voluntary, deliberate reform led by an enlightened minority (but only a minority) in the still ruling Communist parties, and, in the Polish case, at the top of the military and the police. Their advance consists of an unprecedented retreat: undertaking to share power, and even—*mirabile dictu*—talk of giving it up altogether if they lose an election.²

Yet one is bound to ask how far the retreat is voluntary, how far involuntary, and whether it might not become a rout. For if one talks to the intelligentsia in both countries, then the comparison that comes to mind is less with 1968 than with 1848, less with the Prague Spring than with the Springtime of Nations. The greatest opposition demonstrations in Budapest have been held on the 1848 anniversary: March 15. Among other rites, symbolic tribute is traditionally paid before the statue of Józef Bem, who commanded the Hungarian insurrectionary army in 1848. Józef Bem was a Pole.

Polish-Hungarian cooperation has not got quite that far again, although a Polish opposition leader may be invited to speak at the reburial of Imre Nagy, leader of the 1956 revolution, on June 16: the next great symbolic event in Budapest, and one that the authorities fear will be highly charged. But certainly the Poles and the Hungarians, governments as well as oppositions, are now looking to each other for examples, precedents, and even direct support. For they are still alone in Eastern Europe. So far, this is the springtime of just two nations. What they are doing would be quite impossible without Gorbachev’s tolerance, his example, and the processes he has, wittingly or unwittingly, set in motion. Unlike in 1848, they can also count on benign (if ineffectual) support rather than resistance from the major powers to their west. But around them are still the frightened, hidebound, or openly repressive regimes of East Germany, Czechoslovakia, Bulgaria, and indescribable Romania: the “gang of four,” as one American specialist has nicely put it.³
In the race for freedom of speech and freedom of enterprise, the Hungarians are currently in the lead, although Poland is coming up fast. In the political stakes, Hungary leads in words but Poland in deeds.

In early May, Poland got its first independent, opposition daily paper, the *Gazeta Wyborcza*. Its editor in chief is the historian Adam Michnik, one of the sharpest of Solidarity intellectuals, and the paper is organized by Helena Luczywo, for the last seven years editor of Poland’s leading underground weekly, *Tygodnik Mazowsze*, and an unsung heroine of the Polish opposition. But this and the revived Solidarity weekly, *Tygodnik Solidarności*, are both subject to formal censorship. Further liberalization of censorship is promised, but *samizdat* publishers and editors still agonize over whether or not to “surface from underground” and legalize their publications.

In Hungary, by contrast, there is no formal censorship, and the once effective conventions of informal (self-)censorship have simply broken down. Independent publishers and periodicals bloom like crocuses. There is almost riotous competition to publish everything and anything—Imre Nagy, Orwell, Solzhenitsyn, the more outrageous the better. And while the Polish official press is now interesting, the Hungarian official press and, what is more, journalists on official radio and television are in the vanguard of emancipation.

In liberating private enterprise, and attracting Western capital, Hungary is also ahead, although the Rakowski government in Poland is in some ways even more shameless. Its message, symbolized by the industry minister, Mieczyslaw Wilczek, himself at once a millionaire private entrepreneur and Party member, is: “*enrichissez vous!*” But the message is directed as much—or more—to members of the existing ruling class, the *nomenklatura*, and to Western (especially German and Austrian) investors as it is to the man in the street, who does not have their options or connections. In both Poland and Hungary, the process whereby members of the *nomenklatura* advance into private enterprise, using the power and connections that go with their official positions, proceeds apace.

There have been many suggestions as to how communism might be turned back into capitalism. But this is the simplest of all: communist bosses become capitalist bosses! The simplest, although hardly the most attractive. The Solidarity-opposition election program (formally, the Election Program of the Citizens’ Committee “Solidarity”) specifically warns against the danger of the “*uwłaszczenie nomenklatury*,” that is, of the *nomenklatura* becoming owners. But others, in both Hungary and Poland, argue that this process also has advantages: compensating some members of the *nomenklatura* for their loss of political power, and dividing it between those who stand to lose and those who stand to gain. One might call this the “*nomenklatura* buy-out” theory.

In politics, Poland takes the lead, with the hectic and sometimes hilarious drama of its first halfway genuine election in fifty years. This is, of course, only a halffree election, the product of a remarkable but risky deal made during two months of negotiations, from early February to early April, at the so-called Round Table meetings—actually many tables, and each with just two sides, authorities and Solidarity-opposition. The Round Table deal is a compromise, but an open-ended compromise. The Solidarity-opposition side secured the restoration of both the workers’ and the
farmers’ Solidarity as fully independent organizations, and the promise of legalization for an independent students’ union. It also secured completely free elections to a newly created upper house of parliament, the Senate, and free competition for 35 percent of the seats in the existing lower house, the Sejm.

The authorities secured a guaranteed majority in the Sejm, although the Polish United Workers’ party as such has only 38 percent of seats guaranteed, with the rest going to its (until now) compliant “coalition” parties and collaborationist Catholic organizations. They also got Solidarity’s agreement to an early election (first round, June 4; second round, June 18), thus giving the opposition virtually no time to organize a campaign from less than scratch. In addition, the constitution now includes a powerful new office of president, which in the first instance can be expected to go to General Jaruzelski.

Around this basic political deal there is wound a large fabric of more detailed agreements—or agreements to disagree—on everything from the economy to censorship and from the judiciary to coal mining. At the Round Table, the opposition had to settle for rather less than half a loaf on most of these issues—but Lech Wałęsa’s key political adviser, Bronislaw Geremek, argues that “a dynamic process has been set in motion,” and everything is up for transformation in that process. The authorities have agreed, in black and white, that this is “the beginning of the road to parliamentary democracy.” (No qualifying adjectives, although according to a fly on the wall, the government side at one point tried to introduce a parenthesis after this sentence with words to the effect that “the government-coalition side regard parliamentary democracy as socialist democracy.” The Solidarity-opposition side then proposed a further sentence to the effect that this was “the beginning of the building of a sovereign, independent Poland.” Just the beginning! Each then abandoned its provocative formulation. So much for the word “socialism.”

There are to be free elections in four years’ time. Neither side knows what will happen in those four years.

The workers’ and farmers’ Solidarity unions are slowly being rebuilt, although with none of the euphoric surge of autumn 1980. The rebuilding of the unions and the election campaign are, say most activists, complementary and mutually reinforcing. Last spring, Lech Wałęsa sat in the Lenin Shipyard in Gdansk, besieged by riot police, with a thousand angry young workers chanting “there is no freedom without Solidarity.” This spring, he sits in the Lenin Shipyard, at a calm, wholly legal, meeting with the 261 Solidarity-opposition candidates for parliament. The meeting is filmed under the direction of Andrzej Wajda, himself running for the Senate. The candidates have gathered in the very same hall where it all began with the birth of Solidarity in August 1980. There are the same model ships, the same white eagle on the wall, even the same bust of Lenin. As Wałęsa walks up onto the platform he gives that Lenin a laughing glance, as if to say, “So who whom to you, old chum.”

Interestingly, this Polish deal—a calculated gamble for both sides—has been held up as a positive example by Hungarian Party officials, but as a negative example by most independent Hungarian intellectuals and the opposition. They want free elections, with no handicaps, no quotas, and no new upper house. After free elections, the one sovereign parliament should form the new government and
promulgate a new constitution. “After the election,” says a senior official in the justice ministry, “the Hungarian Socialist Workers’ party will have the same position as other parties.” It is rather like one of those weary old East European jokes: the Hungarians are behaving like Poles and the Poles are behaving like Hungarians.

Yet some basic elements are the same. There is a government and an opposition. The government is not like any Western government: it is both stronger (with the whole extensive apparatus of the Party-police-military-nationalized industry-state) and weaker (no legitimacy, deeply divided). The opposition is not like any Western opposition. These two heterogeneous, indeed fissiparous partners are talking about how to transform their countries into what they call “normal” countries, by the end of the twentieth century. When they say “normal” they mean Western, European, liberal, democratic, with a market economy based on property rights, a freely elected parliament, and an independent judiciary. Something between Switzerland and Sweden. “Return Kraków to Europe” says a sign in the window of the students’ union on Kraków’s medieval market square, and that is the theme that recurs, again and again, in every program, speech, and conversation, official as well as unofficial: the return to something called “Europe.”

They may not arrive. Beside that old favorite, the Spanish model of transition from dictatorship to democracy, excited intellectuals talk of the recent Chilean model, the South Korean, even the Iranian…. But whatever happens, this is an ineradicable moment. It might be an important moment, too, for the West, and especially for the Western left. For one message of Poland and Hungary today was summed up for me by a leading activist of Hungary’s opposition Free Democrats: “We say there is no third way. There is no credible alternative between Western capitalism and Eastern socialism.”

Between the opposition fete in Budapest and the smoke-filled rooms of the British Labour party, with its leadership busy trying to turn a socialist program into a social democratic one, there is, perhaps, the trace of an historical connection.

Future historians will have to explain how Poland and Hungary, starting from such very different circumstances at the beginning of the 1980s, came to such relatively similar positions at the end of the decade. Among the general causes of these extraordinary developments, they will surely mention the impact of Gorbachev, the economic crisis, relations with the West, Solidarity and other forms of “pressure from below,” and perhaps also the intellectual crisis of the left in the rest of Europe. But to assess the relative importance and complex interaction of these major causes will require greater distance, tranquil reflection, and more sources.

In the meantime, we are condemned to reconstruct the story from a tissue of direct observation, official and unofficial publications, anecdote, and informed guesswork. In Poland, the story is one of a remarkable coming-together: for almost no one imagined that the great gulf between “the power” and “the society,” between Jaruzelski and Walesa, could be so swiftly bridged. Many details of this Polish bridge building are still obscure. But two things are clear. First, it would not have been possible without explicit permission from Gorbachev. Secondly, the essential domestic impulse was given by two waves of strikes in May and August of 1988, with the second wave larger than the first, and the strikers putting the restoration of Solidarity at the top of their demands.
Markers on the path to the Round Table included a fraught and tentative debate about a possible “anti-crisis pact,” in the first half of 1988; a Byzantine sequence of private talks about talks; direct talks between Lech Walesa and the interior minister, General Kiszczak, which were literally precipitated by the second wave of strikes; a dramatic television debate between Lech Walesa and Alfred Miodowicz, the leader of the official trade unions (OPZZ) at the end of November; and, last but by no means least, two stormy meetings of the Central Committee in which General Jaruzelski even threatened to resign in order to push through the direct dialogue with Solidarity.

The role of Prime Minister Rakowski in all this is murky. The opening seems to have been led rather by General Kiszczak, who as interior minister presumably drew on police intelligence reports about rising popular discontent and the danger of an explosion; by a group of Party reformists including the former foreign minister, Jósef Czyrek, and the former labor minister, Stanislaw Ciosek; and by some top military men. Rakowski, whose personal grudges against Solidarity go very deep, and who came into office in October 1988 proclaiming his own capacity to save the country without it, was not a major direct actor in the negotiations. The record may one day show this to be a grave underestimation of Mr. Rakowski’s capacity for duplicity. What is clear is that the conversion of Jaruzelski was pivotal. How and by whom that was done is still unknown (at least to this writer). But without question the personal role and authority of General Jaruzelski on this side is as crucial as that of Lech Walesa on the other.

The bridge is still of rope rather than steel. Seven years of bitter conflict are not easily forgotten. On both sides there are fierce and vociferous opponents of compromise. Alfred Miodowicz of the official trade unions is the most visible leader of reaction inside the Party. He has strong support from Prague and East Berlin (although that is not much use against Moscow!), a large constituency among the Party bureaucracy and nomenklatura, and even the chance of appealing to a significant part of the working class by a populist demagogy directed against the cost and injustice of economic reform. On the opposition side, teen-agers still take to the streets shouting the angry chants of martial-law Poland, and Walesa’s leadership is rejected by groups ranging from the right-wing nationalist Confederation for an Independent Poland (KPN) to the crypto-Trotskyite “revolutionary” faction of the refounded Polish Socialist party (PPS-RD), as well as by his old comrade in the original Gdansk strike, Andrzej Gwiazda. Polish politics today are anything but simple.

In the discussions of the Solidarity National Executive Commission (KKW), the lessons of 1980–1981 are constantly being drawn anew. One might almost say that both sides have learned politics. If in 1980 it was workers against apparatchiks, in 1989 it is politicians against politicians. In the long hours and days at the Round Table, the top leaders on both sides do seem to have come to understand each other better, and in part to have found a common language, or at least to have resolved to adhere to some basic rules of self-restraint in a period of political transition. This is still an “understanding of elites.” It can be destroyed from below. In the provinces, things look very different. But the coming-together at the top remains staggering. Just one example: toward the end of the Round Table, Adam Michnik gave an interview in which he excoriated the obstructionism of the official trade unions, comparing them to the hated Zomo riot police. A few days later he was personally congratulated on this interview by…General Jaruzelski. Michnik, for his part, has
subsequently gone out of his way to praise General Jaruzelski, publicly, for his political courage in
deciding to reverse the course of the last seven years and reach an agreement with Solidarity.

In Hungary, by contrast, the story of the last few years is that of a remarkable coming-apart: the
coming-apart of the Kádárite consensus, so that from one apparently seamless (although seamy)
web there have suddenly emerged both real opposition parties and very distinct factions within the
Hungarian Socialist Workers’ party. Even six months ago no one would have imagined that at a fete
held by the Alliance of Democratic Youth (FIDESZ), in a Budapest youth park, the platform would
be occupied by no fewer than seven political groupings, with the man from the communist party just
one among many, and seated near the end of the table. The groups represented were FIDESZ itself,
founded by students last spring\textsuperscript{15} ; the Alliance of Free Democrats (SZDSZ), which grew out of the
earlier “democratic opposition”, the Hungarian Democratic Forum (MDF), an important but inchoate
“populist” front; the two so-called “nostalgic” parties, the Social Democrats and the Smallholders,
whose predecessors received, respectively, 17.4 percent and 57 percent of the vote in Hungary’s last
halfway free election, in November 1945; the People’s party, an attempt to win the agrarian vote,
partly initiated by people from within the existing power structures; and the Hungarian Socialist
Workers’ party, that is, the Communist party as effectively refounded after its predecessor
disintegrated during the 1956 revolution. Next to the Party representative there was an empty seat,
which was meant to be taken by a spokesman for the Ferenc Münnich Society, a group of
disaffected Stalinists. The ghost at the feast.

Not surprisingly at a FIDESZ rally the spokesman for FIDESZ, a forceful and charismatic activist
called Viktor Orban, and the spokesman for the Free Democrats, an eloquent sociologist called
Bálint Magyar, earned the warmest applause. Yet as striking as the eloquence of the opposition
speeches is the relative weakness of all their organizations. To be sure, most of them are very new.
To be sure, the real prospect of an election concentrates the mind wonderfully. Yet the rough
membership figures given to me in April were remarkably small: a claimed (but dubious) 20,000 for
the two “nostalgic” parties, Social Democrats and Smallholders; some 14,000 for the Hungarian
Democratic Forum; some 3,000 for the Free Democrats and 2,000 for FIDESZ. Solidarity has more
than that in one factory. So far this really is, as Lewis Namier famously wrote of 1848, a “revolution
of the intellectuals.”

Yet the Hungarian leadership seems to be retreating faster in front of this small,
intelligentsia-based opposition than the Polish leadership has in front of their much more
formidable, worker- and farmer- as well as intelligentsia-based opposition. Why? One partial answer
might be: “They can’t think of any reason not to.” Heavily influenced by contact with the West, long
unaccustomed to treating ideology as anything but a veil, fig leaf, or smoke screen, they really cannot
think of any good reason why they should not give up power! A second, more contingent reason is
the indecision of the Party leader, Károly Grósz. Hailed as an opportunistic, but tough and decisive
leader when he took over from János Kádár in May 1988, he has proved surprisingly weak and
indecisive.

A third, related reason may have to do with the continued struggle for power at the top of the Party.
For in that contest, it has increasingly seemed that “who dares, wins.” Throughout this year, one of Grósz’s chief rivals and by now Hungary’s most popular Party politician, Imre Pozsgay, has continually forced the pace of the Party’s retreat: first, in February, securing a formal (albeit fudged) reassessment of the 1956 revolution and an explicit commitment to the multiparty system; then, in April, holding what was virtually a reformist factional meeting in the town of Kecskemet, and securing a ceremonial Politburo renunciation of the key Leninist principle of “democratic centralism”; then, in May, winning a commitment to hold an early, special national Party conference in the autumn, with the prospect of further “personnel changes.”

The pace is dizzy, speculation risks being confounded between the day of writing and the day of publication. At this moment it does look as if Pozsgay reckons that the best form of advance is retreat; that he hopes, perhaps, to transform the Party into something more like the Italian Communist party, and thereby to win not only the highest office for himself but also some 25 to 35 percent of the vote in a genuinely free election, thus opening the way to a new coalition government (although perhaps reserving responsibility for foreign policy and defense to a new-style presidency). What is more, some independent opinion polls suggest that if Hungarians were to vote tomorrow he just might have a chance of winning such a percentage. But the Hungarians, unlike the Poles, are not going to vote tomorrow, or for several months, and these sentences already contain far too many “ifs.”

Prediction is now, more than ever, impossible. The best and brightest people on both sides in Poland and Hungary have launched into a great and perilous adventure. “You know,” one of the more intelligent Polish Party leaders said to one of the most intelligent of Polish opposition leaders during a coffee break at the Round Table, “all the textbooks tell us how difficult it is to seize power. But no one has described how difficult it is to relinquish power.”

In this great adventure, there is, of course, one very large unknown. At the moment, the bounds of Soviet tolerance—or benign neglect—seem wide enough for almost anything. But opposition demands for transforming or leaving the Warsaw Pact, and for Austrian-style neutrality, will surely test them to the very limit. More important, all the most acute observers in Poland and Hungary, whether in power or in opposition, share the prevailing Anglo-American skepticism about Gorbachev’s chances of continued progress in his perestroika. A check or reversal there could not be without consequences here.

But even if there is no Soviet check or reversal, Polish and Hungarian politics over the next five years are likely to be, at best, an almighty muddle. A period of political turmoil and transition is no recipe for clear, consistent economic policy, and least of all for a policy that demands great material sacrifice from those for whose votes you are competing.

Yet such a policy is, sooner or later, almost inevitable. Prices will have to go still higher. Factories will have to be shut, jobs lost. There will be more inequality as well as poverty. Beside the impoverished majority there is already a nouveau-riche minority, Polish yuppies driving around in Mercedes or BMWs.
A Thatcher government in Britain could sustain harsh measures only because it had clear democratic legitimacy, courts whose independence was unquestioned, and a strong executive: the “elective dictatorship” of Lord Hailsham’s famous phrase. The measures needed in Poland and Hungary are almost certainly much harsher, but no such strong, democratically and juridically legitimated government is in prospect for at least a year or two, if at all.

In the short term, the economic situation will get worse before it (perhaps) gets better. Inflation continues to soar in both countries. There are deep, latent conflicts in these societies—for example, between the interests of manual workers in nationalized industries and those of would-be capitalists, between the clerical and the secular—that have yet to be clearly articulated through opposition politics. And all the stale food of prewar Central European politics, the prejudices and petty nationalisms, must be brought out of the totalitarian freezer, and aired a little while, before being thrown into the dustbin; or at least, as in Western Europe, being relegated to the political margins. Or so one hopes and prays.

“It may not be better,” says Lech Walesa, “but at least it will be more fun.” He was always an optimist.


2 Both the Hungarian Party leader, Károly Grósz, and the leading Party reformist, Imre Pozsgay, have reportedly made statements to this effect, though without a deadline!


4 The title has been translated in the Western press as "Election Gazette," which sounds a bit archaic. Actually Gazeta just means newspaper, so a closer translation might be "The Election Paper." After the election it is to be called simply Gazeta or just possibly Gazeta Niezalezna, that is "The Paper," or perhaps, as we have it in England, "The Independent."

5 On the once effective conventions see my "The Hungarian Lesson" in The New York Review, December 5, 1985. One of the most surreal conversations I had in Budapest was with Mr. György Aczél, for thirty years the Kádár of Hungarian cultural life. I asked him if he did not think, on looking back, that censorship might have been relaxed sooner. There was no censorship, he said. The decision was up to individual publishers and editors. But surely he would not deny that he himself had exercised political control? Oh no, not control. He had merely, he said, had "a sort of influence."

6 For the invitation to the West see, for example, Wilczek's interview in Der Spiegel, No. 3, 1989, under the title "Labour in Poland is Exceptionally Cheap."

7 The statement about two sides must be qualified in at least two respects. First, toward the end of the proceedings it was not at all clear whether the official trade unions (OPZZ) were working with the party of dialogue around Generals Jaruzelski and Kiszczak, or against them. Secondly, at the economic table the divisions ran almost as much within the two delegations as between them, with, crudely speaking, social democrats on both sides and neoliberals on both sides. Someone should write a short history of this extraordinary negotiation. Stenographic protocols of the main discussions exist, although, as usual, some crucial decisions were taken elsewhere, notably at smaller meetings between Lech Walesa, General Kiszczak, and their top advisers.

There is a new genre of opposition anecdote in Warsaw these days, the "corridor stories." They tell of fantastic encounters between oppositionists and their former persecutors, in the corridors of the council of ministers, during the two months of the Round Table. One (true) example: Dawid Warszawski, pseudonymous editor of a leading underground journal, KOS, conducted a video interview with the interior
minister, General Kiszczak, head of the police apparatus responsible for seven years' struggle with the underground. The general politely observed that he had much enjoyed reading Mr. Warszawski's articles over the years. Mr. Warszawski, now using his real name, Konstanty Gebert, responded by asking the general to give an interview to KOS—an offense for which the general should then, presumably, punish himself. The general hesitates for a moment. "Do you offer a large coffee?" he says.

8 This and the other main agreements can be found in Rzeczpospolita, April 7, 1989. See also the interesting article by Adam K잠zinski and Wieslaw Wladyka ("Revolution Step by Step") in the official weekly Polityka, April 29, 1989. This begins by talking of "the creation of parliamentary democracy in socialism" but ends by describing the goal simply as "the metamorphosis of a Stalinist system into parliamentary democracy." Period.

9 See chapter one in my The Polish Revolution: Solidarity (Scribner's, 1984; Vintage, 1985).

10 In the Hungarian context this remark is directed specifically against the "populists" of the Hungarian Democratic Forum, many of whom do maintain that there can be a specifically Hungarian "third way." And of course there are still some oppositionists in both Hungary and Poland who would firmly identify themselves as being on the left. Yet the general point may stand.

11 The crucial Tenth Plenum meeting was on January 16–18, 1989. A preliminary account of the path to the Round Table, by a leading participant, is Bronislaw Geremek's article in Tygodnik Powszechny (April 23, 1989).

12 Among those who threatened to resign at this meeting, alongside Jaruzelski, Kiszczak, and Rakowski, was the defense minister, General Florian Siwicki. Ciosek was minister for trade union affairs in the first period of Solidarity's legal existence.

13 This is perhaps the moment to recall the (apocryphal?) story about Jaruzelski and Professor Janusz Reykowski, a psychologist and now Politburo member who also headed the government delegation in the Round Table group on political reform. The story concerns a conversation in the summer of 1982, at the height of Jaruzelski's attempt to destroy Solidarity under martial law. "Is it true that myths never die?" asks Jaruzelski. "That is correct, General," replies the professor. Jaruzelski: "But you have written that Solidarity has become a myth!" (The story is recounted by Dawid Warszawski in Uncensored Poland News Bulletin, No. 1, 1989.)

14 See the interview with Bronislaw Geremek, Polityka, April 22, 1989, in which he argues that the two sides found a common language, but angrily rejects the charge of an "understanding of elites." Yet this is a charge made not just by the journalists of an official weekly, but by many opposition activists, especially in the provinces.


16 The Solidarity election statement on foreign policy carefully does not question Poland's membership of the Warsaw Pact, but suggests that the alliance should be transformed to give equal rights to its smaller members and to reflect the democratization taking place internally. Other opposition groups in Poland are less cautious. In Hungary, virtually all the opposition parties, and some members of the ruling party, talk of Austrian-style neutrality as the goal. The Free Democrats' Basic Program says, "Our aim is to create a neutral Hungary," although a more immediate objective is to "achieve a state of affairs whereby the Warsaw Pact does not influence the domestic policies of its sovereign member states and exercises increasingly less restriction on their foreign policies." At the opposition fete the FIDESZ speaker won loud applause for suggesting that Hungary might leave the Warsaw Pact "even unilaterally." In a free election the issue seems unavoidable.

17 Hungary's new foreign minister, Gyula Horn, said in a speech shortly before his elevation that we have "no reassuring guarantees" of a victory for the Gorbachev line in the Soviet Union (MTI report, April 21). A senior Solidarity adviser told me that one reason for settling for what they could get at the Round Table was the fear that this favorable external situation might not last.

18 One Polish economist has commented that the cure for two-digit inflation might just be three-digit inflation. In other words, when it gets really bad people may understand the need to take drastic steps to prevent it. Inflation will of course be fueled by the wage-indexation arrangements agreed at the Round Table. But Solidarity-opposition negotiators argue that without such indexation there might simply be an explosion of workers' protest. A further problem is, however, that workers may in effect be compensated at the expense of farmers, who suffer most directly from inflation, and can respond by cutting food production. The solidarity of the two Solidarities—workers' and farmers'—may be sorely tried.

19 In Poland, the tension between those from what Adam Michnik once called the "lay left" and those from the Catholic right, between, as it were, the
pink and the black, has already begun to reemerge in the Polish election campaign. One example is the contest for the "non-party" parliamentary seat in the Warsaw borough of Zoliborz between one of the most famous activists from the "lay left" tradition, Jacek Kuron, and a distinguished Catholic lawyer, Władysław Ślą-Nowicki. Ślna-Nowicki apparently has the backing of the Primate, Cardinal Józef Glemp, but Kuron is the candidate from the agreed, national Solidarity-opposition list. Kuron also has what is considered in Poland to be the considerable advantage of having been received in Washington by President Bush. One might say that in this particular contest, the President has helped the Democrat rather than the Republican.