

Lublin, 23 June 1990

Political Pluralism in Poland

1. This seems to be the hottest issue of the day in Poland.
2. For years, we fought in the name - among other things - of pluralism: political and trade-union. But in fact all we meant was dualism.
3. And now we are faced with two problems at once:
  - a. pluralism remains, in practice, only potential;
  - b. some say that unity is more needed than diversity.

4. Potential choice does not issue in actual choosing: no clear alternatives!

Perhaps pluralism arises only when there occur acts of practical choosing?

5. Lack of credible political institutions. Instead, our political life is centered around:

symbols - unifying

personalities - ?

theoretical programmes - no attractive visions, no clear differences

danger on basing pluralism on the most solid but also most divisive traditional ground: interests

6. The problem of Citizens' Committees:

their tradition

their ideology

their actual role - and its change: from an instrument of democratic,  
liberalizing change into the basis of "our" government  
their prospects: either a nursery or a party

7. Some adherents of the government:  
support first, debate later  
(and the theory of gradual progress)

form alliances = one-member alliances

8. Weakness of organizations and institutions, strength of informal  
groups:  
results anti-pluralistic but divisive

9. The danger of marginalization and radicalization of dissent: no  
institutional outlets!

10. Future possibilities:

pluralism of courts and idol-worshippers

pluralism of interests

pluralism of programmes looking for supporters

pluralism of institutions, combining elements of these three