

Solidarity ban . . .

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For its part, most of the West has employed euphemisms to dress up Poland's outrages against Solidarity — hence against liberty — in a prettier face. So the threat of invasion was described as a threat of "military intervention." So Solidarity's leaders (including Walesa) have not been arrested and jailed but "detained" or "interned." And so Jaruzelski has been routinely described as "premier" or "leader" or, at worst, "military rules."

In a far more accurate offhand remark he did not expect to be quoted, Reagan has described dictator Jaruzelski and the goonish comrades around him as "a bunch of bums." But Jaruzelski is far worse than that. He is a Soviet quisling, a puppet, a stooge, a dutiful dummy to the Kremlin ventriloquists.

From the moment of Solidarity's birth, the Poles comprehended the magnitude of their enterprise: They were calling into question the essence of communist dogma. In the words of the country's Catholic primate, Archbishop Josef Glemp: "There are so many examples of the trampling of man, of disrespect for man's dignity." The Poles knew the stakes. As Walesa said 18 months ago: "If we lose this time, we will never rise again, (for the regime) has an army and we have none." But they also knew, all along, the staggering odds against their success.

Solidarity's experiment is over now. It has ended, as inevitably it had to — a noble cause, and true, crushed by a bunch of bums beating up the populace, brutalizing the nation in the name of something called "the Brezhnev Doctrine," and hiding behind the usual shining labels to cover their usual grimy deeds.

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Backlash unfair . . .

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But along with this trend has come an interesting form of backlash. Like those who tried to persuade women to quit their jobs after World War II on the pretense that they were taking jobs away from veterans, the new critics are once again telling women to quit work and go home. One of the reasons unemployment is so high, it seems, is because there are so many women competing for jobs with men. Same song, second verse.

The difference this time is in the nature of the "reasoning." After the war, young women were expected to stay home and have children because it was patriotic; now, so goes the new argument, young women should stay home and have children — instead of working — because it is healthy.

Older first-time mothers (those in their early 30s) do have a slightly lower fertility rate and a higher risk of complications during pregnancy than younger women; but using possible health risks as a scare tactic to keep women out of the job market is hardly the way to curb unemployment.

Regardless of how hard they try, the new doomsayers can't scare women out of the workplace and back into the kitchen because the old myths won't work anymore. Just ask my friend Tish.

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