

people: Get rich quick! Drive an expensive car, so that you can be like they are in the West (especially, of course, America).

Soros has played an important role in this, since he not only founded newspapers and private radio and television stations, but he and his supporters are also pushing the educational “reform” in Poland. The concept for this reform was elaborated by Anna Radziwill of the Polish branch of the Soros Foundation, known as the Batory Foundation. She is a high-ranking official of the Education Ministry, who has survived all the various changes in government, and works with the Vienna Institute for Humanist Studies, which is affiliated with Soros. The basic points of the reform are to reduce the number of school years by a year (*gymnasium* would only last three years), and to replace the classical fields of history, mathematics, languages, and science, with sociology, psychology, and other “ologies.” Jerzy Oledzki, the former Deputy Education Minister under the Suchocka regime, put it this way: “Creative thinking will no longer be required; students will only be required to learn how to handle an automobile, but not how to build a new one. Students themselves will decide which fundamental values they want to follow. The school is not allowed to convey any fundamental beliefs concerning man and his role in society” (see accompanying interview). Meanwhile, the drug problem in Polish schools is almost as bad as it is in the West—and here, too, one should not forget George Soros’s role, as one of the chief initiators of a worldwide campaign for drug legalization.

There is a vicious cycle here: The IMF, Soros, and the big international banks have, by shock therapy and privatization, destroyed Poland’s economy, creating a sense of uprootedness or a Darwinist frame of mind on the part of the youth, accentuated by Soros’s influence in the media, the universities, and the schools; then, in the second phase of shock therapy, many young people no longer even know what has hit them, in the virtual world of post-industrialism.

Reality strikes

But, we began by saying there was a healthier political-psychological climate. How can Poland break out of this vicious cycle?

Certain circles in Poland seem to understand very well, that the clock has struck for George Soros. Every serious representative of politics, the Church, economic life, and the trade unions is now talking about the danger of a financial crash—globally and also in Poland. Primate Glemp, soon after Easter, spoke of the growing danger of such a crash. And a high-ranking member of the Budget Research Committee of the Sejm (Parliament), Dr. Witold Rutkowski, was very concrete about what is in store for Poland (see interview). He expects a collapse of the currency, the zloty, comparable to the currency crises of Southeast Asia, in two to three months, at the latest. The background to this is a

massive flow of international “hot money” into the Polish financial markets, where one can get 25-30% interest rates for short-term investments. “The time is approaching,” said Dr. Rutkowski, “at which this money will be pulled out, and then the zloty will fall through the floor.” In the recent period, \$8 billion of such hot money has fled Poland, and this tendency can be expected to increase exponentially, up to the point of a crash.

One gets an impression that the real elites of the country are preparing for a crash, with the idea that they will then take measures to restore sovereignty to their nation.

Interview: Jerzy Oledzki

Education must foster the human person

Mr. Oledzki, Poland’s former Deputy Minister of Education (1992-93), is presently a professor at the Warsaw Polytechnical School. He has been a member of the Solidarnosc trade union since 1980. He spoke with Anna Kaczor Wei on May 5.

EIR: The subject of education is being discussed right now all over Europe. The debate seems to be between those who want to base education on a humanist Christian concept of man, in the tradition of the Renaissance, and those who, like Lord William Rees-Mogg, see education as nothing but a utilitarian tool to spread information. Lord Rees-Mogg once wrote that, in the Information Age, only 5% of society will need a good education. How do you see those debates here in Poland?

Oledzki: These kinds of discussions have been going on for centuries, which is an inevitable consequence of man’s existence on Earth. These kinds of questions are asked all the time: Where are we heading?

Here in Poland, the dispute is also going on. I do not know whether former Education Minister Stelmachowski has read Lord Rees-Mogg’s words, but in one discussion, he said that the basic task of the school is to teach the student how to write, read, speak a foreign language (primary level), operate a computer, and drive a car. These are the basic things, he said, and the rest is not so important. If the school manages to deal with that, one can choose the rest, depending on one’s life’s pursuit.

This is a provocative statement, provoking disputes about the basis of the education system, and I do not agree with it. I think that education has to include elements that foster the development of a human person. If we reduce education to those elementary stages—connected to acquiring the skills to

function in a contemporary world—we will entirely eliminate that which is the essence of the Christian civilization in Europe, namely, putting stress on the dignity of a human person, on the imperative of development, which means that one cannot bury one's talents; one has to "settle accounts" before the Lord and show what one has done with those talents. With this approach, we cannot reduce education to simple formulas, which Mr. LaRouche points out and criticizes.

One cannot solve dilemmas posed by education without an attempt to provide an honest answer to the following question: Who is man and what is most important in his or her life? Now, individualism, so fashionable today, claims that a man has no norms, rules, or any moral duties above himself, does not have goals or tasks to fulfill—so he takes nothing and nobody into consideration. Pursuit of happiness boils down to a peculiar "applied felicitology," whose main slogan is "live at peace with yourself."

The opposite of this model is a school which aims at maximizing the development potentials of a student, which, at the same time, gives incentives for behaviors and attitudes related to the courage to live in the truth. One can describe it as a model which fosters the development of personality. It is obvious that the graduate of such a school will be full of a creative inventiveness, and will have a pro-innovation attitude. This kind of education system shapes students' ability to use their minds and to co-exist with the universe.

EIR: Given the tasks ahead of mankind, namely, that we must guarantee the future for 5.2 billion inhabitants of our planet, Lyndon LaRouche has called upon nations to develop the Eurasian Land-Bridge, based on infrastructure building. It would not only connect Europe with the Pacific and Indian Oceans, but would represent one of the greatest challenges in the field of technology, science, and culture. LaRouche stresses that the construction of the Eurasian Land-Bridge is not possible without a Renaissance in education, based on the Socratic principle of "knowing" rather than "learning." What is your thinking about this method of "a Socratic principle" as a basis for a Renaissance in education?

Oledzki: I have been following this area of Mr. LaRouche's work with great interest and enthusiasm. The matter of education as a process of investigating the universe is, for me, the most convincing model of education, because that is exactly the way man has managed to subdue the world, to get to know it. The process of cognition, the process of experimenting which is connected to it, the process of using patterns of certain accomplishments, led to solutions, to breakthroughs in our learning about the world—we experienced such breakthroughs before, and we experience them now; sometimes we do not yet know what to call them, but they are happening every day. This approach to education, which includes experimentation, is very appropriate, and it is a pity that it is not presented better in all the research in pedagogical schools. From time to time one hears voices calling for using this

approach. I am very happy that it is promoted by Mr. LaRouche.

EIR: After the political transformation in 1989, in Russia, Hungary, and other former Soviet bloc countries, a major reform debate started in the field of education. There has been a major effort made by cultural foundations, such as the Soros Foundation, to influence the debate about the content of education and promote very specific cultural and political campaigns. What role do the Soros Foundation, and similar groups, play in Poland?

Oledzki: This is a problem all over the world. The matter of international organizations that try to influence the shaping of the education system is under investigation in many countries, where those organizations work. There are many of them, all proclaim to be bringing aid. Their slogans sound very nice and worthy of support; however, it is no good when one of these organizations starts to dominate. Right now, we are seeing some movements that claim that nations have reached the limits of their development, and that there is a need to look for supranational solutions. Therefore, if we base the development of a given society, a given nation, on its experience, tradition, on the values which that nation respects, the moment an international organization steps in, people start to ask questions: Aren't they trying to destroy that which we consider very precious to us? All the aid such organizations provide is looked at through a prism: What do they really want? In what way do they want to help us? Or perhaps one should put their "aid" into quotation marks.

There are such fears and suspicions toward various foundations, not only the Batory Foundation (which is George Soros's foundation). There is a certain distrust justified by what I have said already: the fear about whether we can preserve the system of values which we consider precious to us, given that education transmits tradition, of course, always with the element of moving ahead, innovating. This transmission of tradition takes place through the teaching of a native language, history, and most of all, through passing along certain moral examples. We watch all those foundations very closely, and of course, those groups which use the aid from foundations have to be aware what is behind them.

We do not think it is good that one of those international organizations dominates and starts to take a monopoly position. We suspect that the Batory Foundation has such a position. It is very influential; many of its board members, founders, or people working with it have prominent government positions, and this makes us very sensitive to the whole ideological baggage attached to this foundation.

EIR: In the both United States and in western Europe, there is a big cultural problem, namely, drugs and an increasing influence of New Age ideas. According to a recent UN narcotics study, there has been a dramatic rise in drug consumption among youth in eastern Europe, in particular in Russia. What

does this problem look like in Poland?

Oledzki: This problem is escalating, and it is very serious. Everybody who is involved in education has to deal with it. Of course, we face a very serious obstacle due to our financial crisis. In Poland, we had a special situation in the past, because Catholicism was strong, and also during the communist period, the Church prevented the abandonment of a certain system of values. This protected us for some time against the wave of drugs that flooded the West, but this protection is becoming weaker and weaker, because of the economic collapse causing the crisis in education, and in many families.

This is the kind of situation which makes the drug trade easier, and we are aware of it; we try to fight back whenever this is possible. We have to deal with things which were unthinkable a few years ago: Because of drugs, some schools are temporarily closed or special guards have to be hired.

These are drastic measures, but in some cases this seems to be the only solution. Here in Warsaw, almost in every school students have contact with drugs to a greater or lesser degree, although teachers deny that. However, people who work with kids who have drug problems, confirm that this is a widespread phenomenon. This is definitely one of the most serious problems that confronts teachers nowadays.

Interview: Witold Rutkowski

Contours of Poland's financial crisis

Mr. Rutkowski, a Polish economist, was interviewed by Anna Kaczor Wei, during a visit to Warsaw in May.

EIR: Lyndon LaRouche has been warning about a collapse of the global financial system. One of its symptoms was the currency crisis in Southeast Asia at the end of last year. How is this crisis perceived here in Poland?

Rutkowski: I would like to say that the financial system established in Jamaica in 1976 has defended itself against such phenomena for quite a long time. Over 20 years have passed, and everybody has been aware that the system was not perfect: the rejection of dollar convertibility into gold, the introduction of flexible exchange rates—everybody knew what kind of dangers that meant.

A great deal of hope was placed in financial supervision, but it turned out that this supervision failed, and the stability of the whole financial system is now threatened. I think that the majority of the people who deal with financial affairs are

aware that some steps have to be taken in order to improve the system, which will be very difficult, or to change it into another system, which would be even more difficult right now. Some solution has to be found, since everybody knew at the beginning, and knows now, that the system has a certain paresis. However, so far there is no official proposal concerning the introduction of a reasonable new order.

EIR: Poland is now a part of this global financial system. I mentioned during our earlier conversation that one can see the flow of speculative capital to Poland. What can you say about the monetary-financial system in Poland, and about those people who say that Poland and other countries of Central Europe may soon be the target of speculative attacks, just as Southeast Asia was before?

Rutkowski: The present state of Polish finances results from the bad policy of the Polish National Bank, and the fact that, in principle, the Polish government has lost any possibility of making decisions on matters of exchange rates. That was unintentional and unforeseeable. Right now, the Polish National Bank (NBP) is the only institution which can make decisions on such matters. Such a situation is unknown. The other example is Sweden, but there the Parliament has the right to veto. In Poland, the Parliament cannot; only the NBP can do it, but everybody knows that it will not!

EIR: You mentioned mistakes of the NBP. Can you specify what you mean by that?

Rutkowski: Especially the discrepancy in interest parities. In Poland, this is about 10%—it is an unusual case, a real El Dorado for all kinds of speculative transactions. It is profitable to invest money in zlotys [the Polish currency] and earn an interest rate in Poland. Of course, it is clear who pays: Polish finances, which then puts a burden on the Polish budget; an unbalanced budget requires that taxes be raised, so this is the dilemma of Polish financial policy: in order to balance the budget, one would have to eliminate the mistakes of the Polish National Bank; instead, the burden is passed onto the shoulders of the taxpayer. This creates a great deal of discontent.

EIR: What is the role here, if any, of so-called hedge funds, run by such individuals as George Soros? Is the capital from such funds used to speculate in Poland?

Rutkowski: There are no hedge funds in Poland. However, it is obvious that in the case of a so-called bull market, there is a rush to buy, and then reserves of such funds are used. But such funds are not active in Poland. The Polish currency market is still in an embryonic state, and is unable to react to any pressure from the outside. We just got the news that the zloty has gone up by 8% from its official rate, which means that “the market zloty” is 8% more expensive than the official rate set by the NBP, which makes the situation very dangerous, and as a result, the demand for zlotys is very high.