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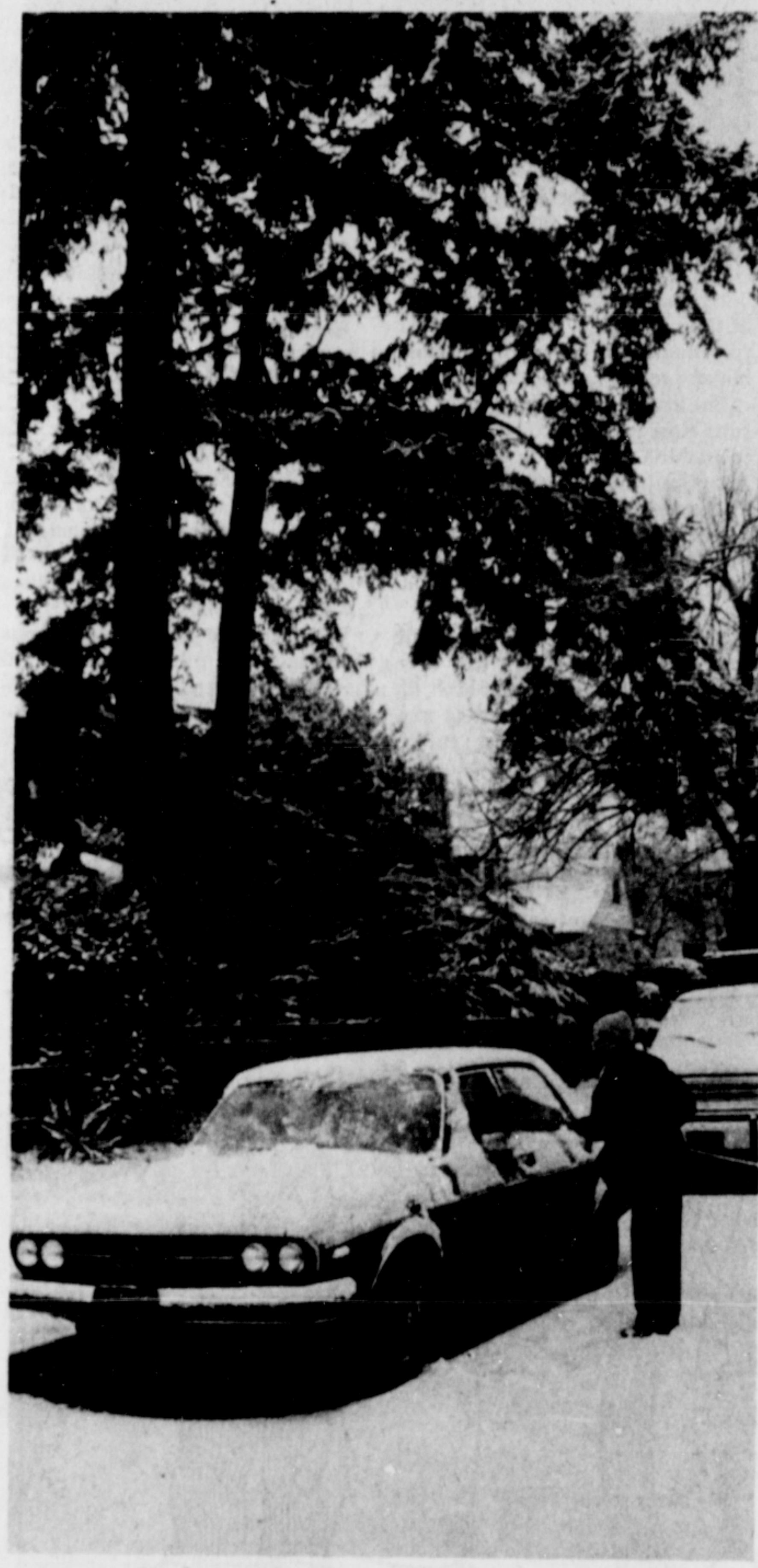

Snowy day in Portland.... (Photo: Richard J. Brown)

From resistance to quiet sabotage

by Bjarke Larsen
Pacific News Service

KATOWICE, POLAND—Fear and resignation, tempered by a profound belief that history cannot be reversed, that some of the reforms brought forth by the independent labor union Solidarity will survive—this was the atmosphere pervading southern and western Poland ten days after the military takeover.

At that time 3,000 coal miners were still on strike in Poland's two largest mines, Huta Katowice and Ziemowit, near the city of Katowice in Silesia in southern Poland. Rumors told of strikes in the Baltic port cities of Gdansk and Szczecin, but except for these three cities, the army seemed to be in full control of the situation.

In the first days after the military takeover, the roads were covered with troops, and tanks and armoured cars were placed on all strategic corners in the cities. Yet by December 17, the army had begun to return to its barracks, and by December 19, when I entered the country, it was possible to drive through large areas of Poland without encountering a single military vehicle.

Apparently the military rulers felt so secure that they left actual street patrols to the "Milicja," the police, and concentrated their efforts on the few factories where workers continued to strike. But for most Poles these strikes seemed doomed. People found it pointless to fight the new regime.

"When Jaruzelski and the new army chose to take over all power, it was no use to fight back. We just have to give up and wait for better times, or else the situation will develop into something even worse," most people said, hinting at the possibility of a Russian invasion.

Others, however, have only given up the face-to-face confrontation of strikes or factory occupations. Instead, they try to fight the regime by working slowly and inefficiently. Several people also told of workers sabotaging factory machinery. There is no measure of how effective this strategy has been. But it was given credit—or blame—for recent failures in the gas and electricity supplies.

In several cities street lights failed altogether or burned only intermittently. Use of gas supplies was forbidden for fear that irregularities in the supply could lead to explosions.

In the area around Katowice, where miners have barricaded themselves underground, military units have surrounded the mines. Several times a day helicopters were seen

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New ownership, new management, new direction

The *Portland Observer*, in its plans for 1982, is embarking on a new program. We feel that Portland needs an alternative voice, and we plan to fill that bill. We will address all issues and pinpoint the facts as we see them.

We will honor those who deserve being honored and expose the exploiters everywhere.

We plan to be the voice of all the people—Black, white, brown and yellow—to bring love and togetherness to Portland and to cancel out the hatemongers of the world who try to keep people apart.

We plan to have the best sports section in the area, giving our readers insight on sports from the local and national perspectives. If there's a big event on the West Coast we will have someone on our staff there reporting the true facts of the game.

Our supreme goal is to report the news without bias and to bring love and joy to the people of the area. We hope that 1982 will be a good year for everyone. If it's newsworthy we'll be there.

Al McGilberry,
Managing Editor

Oregon residents face deep budget cuts

Governor Victor Atiyeh delivered his proposed budget cuts Monday. The cuts are designed to turn $237.2 million from the state budget because of decreased funds available.

The recession has hurt Oregon. Unemployment has reached 11 per cent and is expected to be over 12 per cent by February. Bankruptcies—corporate and personal—are at an all-time high. In the past two years budget cuts have eliminated over 2,000 state employees and programs have been drastically reduced—especially human resources and education.

The Governor recommended cuts totalling $147 million and revenue collections of $100 million through a wine and beer tax and earlier collection of withholding taxes and delinquent taxes.

"I view Human Resources as an insurance program, available to Oregonians when a financial catastrophe occurs," Governor Atiyeh said. "My proposed reductions place the highest priority on maintaining essential programs for those who have nowhere else to turn. For the other state agancies, my priorities were to maintain crucial state services of public safety, economic development, and revenue producing activities."

The Governor did not touch the property tax-relief program through which the state pays 30 per cent of home-owners' property tax bills. He did propose that property tax-relief be tied to income. "The state cannot continue to provide property tax-relief payments to those who make over $50,000 when we cannot afford to provide the needy with critical health and social services."

The shortage of revenue comes both from the decrease in taxes collected due to the recession and resulting unemployment and business failure, and to policy changes.

During the late 1970s the Legislature increased the amounts and the percentages of the general fund that goes to tax relief and local government aid. Between 1969 and 1979 local aid (mostly Basic School Support) rose from 32 per cent of the general fund to 39 per cent; tax relief rose from 4 to 9 per cent.

By the 1977-1979 biennium 48 per cent of the general fund went to local government and tax relief. While expenditures for state government increased by 134 per cent, aid to local government increased 250 per cent and tax relief 604 per cent.

The 1979 Legislature enacted a

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GOVERNOR ATIYEH

Warm weather is just around the corner!

American dream dropped from consumer price index

by Frank Viviano
Pacific News Service

Just a little more than a year from now, a central principle in the American dream will be officially laid to rest.

Simply put, the principle held that the common man in this country not only had an inalienable right to property, but that property should be a common expectation. America was to be a nation of homeowners.

Now the Reagan administration has taken steps toward a landmark policy change which will, in effect, acknowledge the withdrawal of home ownership from the mainstream of American expectations.

Beginning in 1983, the Department of Labor has announced, monthly Consumer Price Index (CPI) estimates of the U.S. cost of living no longer will include the cost of buying a home—prevailing mortgage interest rates and the current market value of real estate. In addition, the proportion of the CPI which is accounted to housing will be reduced to 14 per cent of the index, from its present 25 per cent.

According to Commissioner of Labor Statistic Janet L. Norwood, the change is intended to more accurately measure the cost of living. Because relatively few Americans purchase homes in any given month, she argues, unstable interest rates and soaring real estate prices are not relevant to the actual living costs of most citizens.

The new policy has been warmly received in Congress, where it is viewed as an effective means of curbing federal budgetary increases in such areas as Social Security, the food stamp program and government pensions, which are adjusted against the CPI. It has been condemned for the same reason by pensioners and labor officials.

But the long-term significance of the new CPI lies in its less obvious social implications, rather than its direct effects.

In short, the Reagan price index will make official what a substantial number of Americans already have painfully discovered in recent years: the emergence of a vast chasm in the United States between those who purchased homes in the era of low interest rates and reasonable real estate, and those who never will own a home. The latter category includes most young people and recent immigrants, as well as millions of other who waited too long to enter the housing market.

It is a chasm measured not only in dollars and dreams, but also in historic political import.

Since the day that Abraham Lincoln signed the Homestead Act in 1862, the U.S. government has actively endorsed the concept of a society composed almost entirely of property owners. The concept was modernized by Franklin Roosevelt in 1934 with the Federal Housing Authority (FHA), which guaranteed the loans that made property ownership possible for ordinary working people, and eventually spawned the nation's suburbs.

The policy of the Reagan administration, on the other hand, disguises—and tacitly endorses—a new division of American society along property lines.

Disguised though it may be, that division hardly is subtle. Less than 10 years ago it still was possible, even in high-priced California, to purchase a city home at a monthly cost of little more than $200.

Today, a renter in virtually any American city must expect to pay in excess of $500 for a modest apartment, and look forward to yearly rent hikes as well. By contrast, the 1972 home buyer's mortgage payments remain $200—with property taxes frozen in some states.

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