

Nobel Prize-Winner Lech Walesa

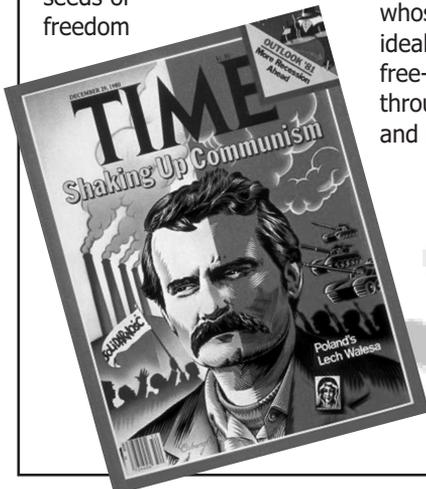
Former President of Poland

Thursday, March 30

Holloway Hall Auditorium, 7 p.m.

Walesa burst into the world spotlight in 1980 during the Lenin Shipyard strike in Gdansk, Poland. Workers, incensed by an increase in prices set by the Communist government, were demanding the right to organize free and independent trade unions. Walesa, an electrician who had long been active in the underground labor movement, arrived at the barricaded shipyard just as the dispirited workers were on the verge of abandoning their strike. Scaling the shipyard walls, he delivered a stirring speech, revitalizing the strike that spread to factories across the nation.

Christened "Solidarity," the strike became a social revolution. Walesa entered into negotiations with the government, convincing it to grant recognition to Solidarity and the right to form independent unions as well as the right to strike. Through years of political turmoil and jail time for thousands of Solidarity members—including Walesa—Solidarity planted the seeds of freedom



and democracy that eventually ended Communist rule in Poland.

For his heroic efforts, Walesa was named "Man of the Year" by "Time" magazine, "The Financial Times," "The London Observer," "Die Welt," "Die Zeit," "L'Express" and "Le Soir." Walesa was awarded the 1983 Nobel Peace Prize.

On December 9, 1990, he became Poland's first democratically elected president, winning more than 74 percent of the votes cast. His term in office set Poland firmly on the path to becoming a free-market democracy. He now heads the Lech Walesa Institute whose aim is to advance the ideals of democracy and free-market reform throughout Eastern Europe and the rest of the world.

"One Person Can Make A Difference" Lecture Series

In addition to keynoting the semester-long "'80s On Our 80th" cultural events series, Walesa is part of SU's Center for Conflict Resolution's "One Person Can Make a Difference" lecture series. The series provides the community the opportunity to be exposed to pioneering individuals in the field of conflict resolution. The lecture series has hosted such notable speakers as Under Secretary General of the United Nations Giandomenico Picco, Ambassador John McDonald and Dr. Arun Gandhi, grandson of Mahatma Gandhi.

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