

SUBJECT: Gorbachev's Visit to Poland

2. SUMMARY: GENERAL SECRETARY GORBACHEV'S VISIT TO POLAND WAS A WELL-RUN AFFAIR, ACHIEVING SOME PROGRESS TOWARD ITS CAREFULLY-DESIGNED OBJECTIVES. IF IT FAILED TO MEET THE EXAGGERATED EXPECTATIONS OF SOME OPPOSITION INTELLECTUALS, IT NEVERTHELESS WAS UNIQUE IN MANY RESPECTS FOR A VISIT HERE BY A SOVIET LEADER. GORBACHEV VISITED A WORKING CHURCH, LAID FLOWERS ON THE KOSZCIUSZKO PLAQUE IN KRAKOW WHERE THE POLISH HERO BEGAN AN UPRISING AGAINST RUSSIA, MET WITH POLISH WORKERS, LISTENED TO STRONGLY WORDED STATEMENTS FROM POLISH INTELLECTUALS AND SAT THROUGH SOME RIPPING FROM POLISH YOUTH. RAISA SHED REAL TEARS AT AUSCHWITZ AND SHOWED A WARM HUMAN TOUCH THROUGHOUT THE VISIT.

FIVE YEARS AGO SUCH BEHAVIOR BY A SOVIET LEADER WOULD HAVE HAD ALL POLAND IN A FEVER OF EXCITEMENT. TODAY EXPECTATIONS ARE PUMPED SO HIGH THAT THE OPPOSITION, AT LEAST, IS EXPRESSING MAINLY DISAPPOINTMENT. TO SATISFY THEM GORBACHEV WOULD HAVE HAD TO RENOUNCE THE LEADING ROLE OF THE PARTY, ENORSE THE RECOGNITION OF SOLIDARITY AND THE HOLDING OF FREE ELECTIONS IN POLAND AND APOLOGIZE FOR KATYN. SINCE PERESTROIKA INTENDED TO MAKE "SOCIALISM" WORK BETTER, NOT REPLACE IT, GORBACHEV UNSURPRISINGLY DID NONE OF THESE THINGS. INSTEAD HE SOUGHT TO IDENTIFY POLISH "RENEWAL" WITH HIS OWN PERESTROIKA, WHILE AT THE SAME TIME REASSURING CONSERVATIVES WITH OCCASIONAL GENUFLECTIONS TO LENINIST FUNDAMENTALISM. GORBACHEV'S SUPPORT FOR JARUZELSKI WAS STRONG AND EXPLICIT. THE POLITICAL REFORM MESSAGE WAS GENUINE, BUT "SOCIALISM" WAS NOT REDEFINED. THE VISIT'S MOST IMPORTANT AND GENUINELY HISTORIC RESULT MAY HAVE BEEN A SMALL CHANGE IN THE PREVAILING NEGATIVE POLISH ATTITUDES TOWARD THE SOVIET UNION--ATTITUDES THAT HAVE BEEN CENTURIES IN THE MAKING. END SUMMARY.

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3. PARTNERS IN REFORM: GORBACHEV'S CENTRAL OBJECTIVE WAS TO DEMONSTRATE THAT HIS REFORMIST VISION, RECENTLY STRENGTHENED BY THE CPSU CONFERENCE, WAS NOT ONLY CONSISTENT WITH POLISH SOCIALIST RENEWAL, BUT HAD BENEFITED FROM POLISH PRECEDENTS. HE ARGUED THAT REFORM EFFORTS OF THE TWO COUNTRIES WERE INTERDEPENDENT AND TOGETHER COULD HAVE FAR-REACHING EFFECTS, DESPITE STODGY, OLD-THINKING OPPOSITION. THIS MESSAGE SHOULD PROVE TO BE GOOD NEWS FOR THE POLISH REGIME--A LICENSE TO PURSUE REFORM OBJECTIVES MORE VIGOROUSLY AND WITH FULL SUPPORT FROM THE SOVIET UNION. WHETHER OR NOT THE POLES FOLLOW UP THE POSSIBILITIES WILL REVEAL JUST HOW MUCH OF A GAMBLER JARUZELSKI IS. GORBACHEV'S "FORWARD TOGETHER" MESSAGE PROBABLY

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HAD LESS IMPACT ON THE POLISH PEOPLE, FEW OF WHOM HAVE ANY BELIEF IN ANY KIND OF SOCIALISM. IT WILL BE UP TO JARUZELSKI, ARMED WITH MOSCOW'S APPROVAL, TO GIVE PERSUASIVE SUBSTANCE TO THE EXPANDED POSSIBILITIES.

4. THE OLD RELIGION: RELATED TO THE REFORM MESSAGE WAS A CLEAR APPEAL TO THE FEW REMAINING SOCIALIST BELIEVERS IN POLAND AND THE LARGER NUMBER BACK IN THE USSR. GORBACHEV MADE AN IMPORTANT PILGRIMAGE TO LENIN'S VILLAGE IN THE TATRA MOUNTAINS WITH THE PRECISE INTENTION OF CONFIRMING THAT PERESTROJKA AND RENEWAL WERE STILL SOCIALIST, LENINIST, AND IDEOLOGICALLY SOUND. SOCIALIST CHANGE WAS THUS VAGUELY ASSOCIATED WITH LENINIST THEOLOGY.

5. BEST FRIENDS: GORBACHEV GAVE STRONG PERSONAL SUPPORT TO JARUZELSKI. OUR OPPOSITION FRIENDS INSIST THAT HE DOESN'T MEAN IT BUT THEY CANNOT EXPLAIN WHY. HE SOUNDED PERFECTLY SINCERE TO MOST OBSERVERS. GORBACHEV DECLARED ON TELEVISION THAT POLAND SHOULD CONSIDER ITSELF LUCKY TO HAVE, AT A CRITICAL MOMENT, A LEADER OF SUCH INTELLIGENCE, PATRIOTISM AND COURAGE; SUCH AN OUTSTANDING INTERNATIONALIST.

6. WHATEVER THEIR PERSONAL RELATIONSHIP AND PUBLIC CAMARADERIE, THERE IS A STRIKING CONTRAST BETWEEN GORBACHEV'S ELEGANT PUBLIC RELATIONS MASTERY AND JARUZELSKI'S PUBLIC WOODENNESS. JARUZELSKI'S SPEECHS ACTUALLY READ BETTER THAN GORBACHEV'S BUT HIS DELIVERY IS FLAT AND UNINSPIRING, PERHAPS DELIBERATELY SO, GIVEN HIS DETERMINATION NOT TO MAKE EMPTY PROMISES OR ENGAGE IN THE HOLLOW "PROPAGANDA OF SUCCESS" CHARACTERISTIC OF THE 1970'S. HOWEVER, HE HAS SWUNG SO FAR THE OTHER WAY THAT HE HAS ALMOST CONVINCED MANY PEOPLE THAT THE SITUATION IS HOPELESS.

7. EXPANDING DIALOGUE: GORBACHEV'S MESSAGES ON POLITICAL REFORM WERE THE MOST DISAPPOINTING ASPECTS OF THE VISIT FOR OUR OPPOSITION CONTACTS, MANY OF WHOM PROFESSED TO SEE IN GORBACHEV AN ALTERNATIVE TO THE POLITICAL STAGNATION THEY DEPLORE IN POLAND. THIS DISAPPOINTMENT WAS LARGELY A MATTER OF EXCESSIVE EXPECTATIONS. THROUGHOUT THE VISIT, HE DID IN FACT MAKE A NUMBER OF THE SYMBOLIC GESTURES THAT POLES DOTE ON. HE MET A BISHOP; HE MET WISE INTELLECTUALS, INCLUDING IMPORTANT CHURCH AND OPPOSITION FIGURES WHO SPOT A HOST OF TOUGH QUESTIONS AT HIM HE MET WITH WORKERS AT A SHIPYARD FAMOUS FOR ITS PARTICIPATION IN 1970 AND 1980 STRIKES; AND HE LAID A WREATH ON THE KOSZCIUSZKO PLAQUE IN THE KRAKOW RYNEK. WHAT HE SAID--OR DID NOT SAY--DISAPPOINTED MANY. (ONE SOLIDARITY ADVISER TOLD US THE INTELLECTUALS' MEETING WAS A "JOKE")

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PRESUMABLY BECAUSE NO ONE DEMANDED THAT GORBACHEV ENDORSE THE LEGALIZATION OF SOLIDARITY.) NEVERTHELESS, THE MEETINGS DID TAKE PLACE, AND THEY DEMONSTRATED THAT FOR THE LEADER OF THE SOCIALIST WORLD, THE CIRCLE OF ACCEPTABLE DIALOGUE PARTICIPANTS HAD EXPANDED. THIS IMPORTANT FACT SHOULD NOT BE BURIED BENEATH JADED SKEPTICISM OR FAILED EXPECTATIONS. THERE CERTAINLY WERE NO TABOO TOPICS AT THE INTELLECTUALS' MEETING. "IS RELIGION STILL THE OPIATE OF THE PEOPLE?" ASKED FATHER KRAPIC FROM CATHOLIC UNIVERSITY. "WHAT ABOUT THE BREZHNEV DOCTRINE?" SAID CATHOLIC JOURNALIST MARTIN KROL. "IS LENINISM STILL RELEVANT? HE DIED EARLY," ASKED PROFESSOR SANDAVER. IT WENT ON FOR THREE AND A HALF HOURS AND WHILE THEY DIDN'T GET IMMEDIATE ANSWERS, THEY WERE PROMISED THEM IN WRITING. THE WHOLE SESSION WAS CARRIED LIVE ON TV.

9. A NEW BEGINNING: GORBACHEV'S SILENCE ON KATYN WAS A MISSED OPPORTUNITY TO PLACE A NEW CORNER POST IN THE FOUNDATION OF POLISH/ SOVIET RELATIONS. NEVERTHELESS, THE VISIT ITSELF WAS AN IMPORTANT CONTRIBUTION. THESE SOVIET-CAMP BILATERAL VISITS ARE PURDENED WITH SO MUCH TRADITIONAL JARGON ON MUTUAL FRIENDSHIP AND COOPERATIVE THIS-AND-THAT, THAT IT IS DIFFICULT TO SAY WHAT IS DIFFERENT AND IMPORTANT. IN THIS CASE, HOWEVER, REFORM, AND ITS MOST ARTICULATE SALESMAN, GORBACHEV, NEEDED ENHANCED CREDIBILITY AND ACCEPTANCE IN POLAND, AND THEY GOT IT. THERE NOW IS A NEW POLICY OF INTERDEPENDENCE, AND A SPECTACULAR FAILURE OF ECONOMIC REFORM IN EITHER COUNTRY WILL CRITICALLY AFFECT THE OTHER.

10. ALSO, THE NEW ELEMENTS OF ECONOMIC INTERDEPENDENCE, FINANCIAL RELATIONS, DIVISION OF LABOR, AND JOINT ACTIVITIES ARE GAINING IMPORTANCE IN REGIONAL ECONOMIC RELATIONS. EFFORTS TO BEGIN BY PUSHING JOINT VENTURES ARE FALTERING. A RETURN TO BASICS WOULD START INSTEAD WITH ENHANCED HUMAN CONTACTS. THIS MEANS MORE PEOPLE-TO-PEOPLE PROGRAMS; GREATLY FACILITATED EXCHANGES WITH ETHNIC POLES IN THE SOVIET UNION; AND EASIER CROSS-BORDER TRAFFIC. MANY OF THE GORBACHEV INITIATIVES IN THIS AREA WERE MEANT TO DEVELOP NEW ECONOMIC AND CULTURAL INTERACTIONS, PARTICULARLY IN THE BORDER REGIONS. THE HUMAN CONTACTS AGENDA ALSO FOCUSED ON THE NEW GENERATION. THE MEETING WITH YOUTH IN KRAKOW MAY HAVE BEEN ONLY SYMBOLIC, BUT IT WAS NOT ACCIDENTAL. THE INTENTIONAL EMPHASIS ON YOUTH IN THAT CITY DOVETAILED INTO A COMPLIMENTARY EMPHASIS ON HISTORICAL INTERDEPENDENCE: YOUNG POLES TODAY OWED MUCH TO THE SACRIFICE OF YOUNG RUSSIANS YESTERDAY.

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11. GORBACHEV WAS ALSO TAKING ADVANTAGE OF A NEW SOVIET WEAPON - HIS PERSONAL POPULARITY. THE PHRASE ITSELF MAY SEEM GROTESQUELY OUT OF PLACE IN POLAND. ITS HARD TO THINK OF ANY SOVIET LEADER AS POPULAR. BUT, AS WITH SO MANY ELEMENTS OF THIS VISIT, IT IS MORE A MATTER OF COMPARATIVE CHANGE. GORBACHEV SEWED HIMSELF TO BE VASTLY MORE POPULAR - OR PERHAPS LESS UNPOPULAR - THAN ANY OF HIS PREDECESSORS, INCLUDING THE TSARS. THIS IS NOTHING LESS THAN AN HISTORIC ACCOMPLISHMENT.

12. ALTHOUGH POLAND IS THREATENED BY PROFOUND ECONOMIC WEAKNESSES, IDEOLOGICAL CHAOS, AND MAJOR INTERNAL DIVISIONS, THE TWO REGIMES ARE LINKED BY A KIND OF RECIPROCAL INTERDEPENDENCE. TO PROSPER, THEY MUST MOVE WITH SUFFICIENT DISPATCH ALONG THE ROAD TO REFORM. LAGGERS MUST BE REASSURED THAT THE PATH IS SOCIALIST, BUT THE ROAD MUST BE AS WIDE AS POSSIBLE TO ACCOMMODATE AS MANY AS POSSIBLE. AND MOST IMPORTANTLY, FELLOW TRAVELERS HAVE TO GET ALONG. THIS WAS GORBACHEV'S MESSAGE.

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