

NATO SITUATION CENTRE
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N A T O R E S T R I C T E D

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The following ASSESSMENT from MOD ITALY DTG 120800Z DEC
has been transmitted to capitals (MFAs and MODs) and MNCs by the
originator

POLAND : POPULAR REFERENDUM ON REFORMS

NADA/ASSESSMENT/8828/DEC 87/MOD ITALY/111515Z.

1. ON NOVEMBER 29, 1987, POLISH PEOPLE WERE CALLED TO THE
POLLS TO EXPRESS THEIR VIEWS ON A PROGRAM OF REFORMS DESIGNED
TO OVERCOME THE SERIOUS POLITICO-ECONOMIC CRISIS.
QUESTIONS POSED REFERRED TO AUSTERITY MEASURES (WITH PRICE
INCREASES FROM 48% TO 20%) AND PROVISIONS DESIGNED TO START
FORMS OF INSTITUTIONAL DEMOCRATIZATION, EVEN IF IN THE FRAMEWORK
OF REAL SOCIALISM WITH EXCLUSION OF THE UNION PLURALISM CALLED
FOR BY SOLIDARNOSC.

THE REFERENDUM WAS CONSULTATIVE AND NOT BINDING.
ON THE EVE OF IT:

- IN THE MEETINGS OF POLISH UNIFIED WORKER PARTY (POUP) CENTRAL
COMMITTEE PLENUM, THIRTY MEMBERS SPOKE AGAINST THE PROGRAM
OF REFORMS OR HOWEVER VOICED STRONG DOUBTS AND RESERVATIONS
- SOLIDARNOSC RECOMMENDED ABSTENTION
- CARDINAL GLEMP RECOMMENDED PARTICIPATION IN THE VOTE
- COMMUNIST UNIONS DECLARED THEIR OPPOSITION TO PRICE INCREASES.

2. RESULTS OF POPULAR CONSULTATION WERE NEGATIVE PARTICULARLY
AS REGARDS THE QUESTION ABOUT AUSTERITY MEASURES.
ABSTENTIONS, THE HIGH NUMBER OF NEGATIVE VOTES, AND BLANK BALLOTS
DID NOT PERMIT TO CROSS THE 5% THRESHOLD OF THOSE ENTITLED TO
VOTE ACCORDING TO THE ELECTORAL LAW.

THEREFORE, EVEN IF THE LARGE MAJORITY OF VOTERS WAS FAVOURABLE
TO REFORMS (ABOUT 3 TO 1), THE GOVERNMENT PLAN WAS REJECTED.
FROM THE ANALYSIS OF THE VOTE, IT EMERGES THAT:

- NUMBER OF VOTERS WAS:
 - . VERY HIGH (AROUND 79%) IN THE CAPITAL, AT CRACOW, POZNA, WROCLAW AND SOME WORKER CITIES
 - . LOW (MINIMUM 56%) IN THE BALTIC REGION AND THE COUNTRY
- THE FOLLOWING WERE DEFEATED:
 - . GEN. JARUZELSKI, MAJOR PROMOTER OF REFORMS

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- . POLISH PRIMATE GLEMP, WHOSE INVITATION TO TAKE PART IN THE VOTE WAS NOT ACCEPTED, PARTICULARLY IN RURAL CENTRES, DENOTING A SPLIT BETWEEN THE LEADERSHIP OF THE CHURCH AND PARISH PRIESTS IN THE COUNTRY WHERE ABSTENTION WAS VERY HIGH
- . SOLIDARNOSC, WHOSE INVITATION WAS ACCEPTED ONLY BY ONE THIRD OF THE ELECTORS
- INSIDE AND OUTSIDE ENEMIES OF REFORMATION COURSE (REPRESENTED BY THE HARD, DOGMATIC WING OF POUW AND THE VARIOUS HUSAK, HONECKER AND ABOVE ALL CEAUSESCU) OBTAINED A SUCCESS
- THE CONSULTATION WAS NOT +DISGUISED+ (FOR THE FIRST TIME IN A COMMUNIST COUNTRY)
- A LARGE PART OF COMMUNIST PARTY AND OFFICIAL UNIONS VOTED RESPECTIVELY AGAINST DEMOCRATIZATION AND AGAINST AUSTERITY MEASURES.

3. THE PARLIAMENT, SEJM, IS NOW EXPECTED TO DRAW ITS CONCLUSIONS FROM THE RESULTS OF THE CONSULTATION. THE SAME WILL DO THE VI PLENUM OF THE CC, ALREADY SCHEDULED FOR DECEMBER 10TH, BUT LIKELY TO BE DELAYED SO AS TO PERMIT A CAREFUL PERUSAL OF THE SITUATION.

SERIOUS POLITICAL PROBLEMS ARE POSED TO JARUZELSKI BY THE RESULTS OF THE REFERENDUM, SINCE HE WAS LOOKING FOR POPULAR APPROVAL OF A PROGRAM OF AUSTERITY WHICH HAD ALREADY CAUSED THE FALL OF GORBUKHA AND GIERSK RESPECTIVELY.

SINCE THE REFERENDUM WAS MERELY CONSULTATIVE, ITS NEGATIVE OUTCOME IS NOT LIKELY TO PROVOKE AN ABANDONMENT OF THE PROGRAM OF REFORMS, WHICH, ON THE OTHER HAND, DOES NOT SEEM TO HAVE ANY ALTERNATIVE.

MEASURES CONSIDERED, HOWEVER, WILL BE ALLEVIATED AND THEIR PACE OF IMPLEMENTATION MORE GRADUAL.

AFTER HIS VISIT IN BUDAPEST, CAPITAL OF THE COUNTRY OF +MARKET SOCIALISM+, JARUZELSKI WILL POSSIBLY GO TO MOSCOW, WHERE GORBACHEV TOO IS ENGAGED IN A REFORMATION PROGRAM.

WE CAN EXPECT NOW THAT POLISH PRESIDENT, THOUGH BEING SUFFICIENTLY STRONG TO REPEL THE ATTACKS FROM THE PARTY'S INTERNAL DOGMATIC WING, WILL MAKE, EVEN IF NOT IMMEDIATELY, SOME REPLACEMENTS AT GOVERNMENT LEVEL. MOST LIKELY AMONG THEM ARE THOSE OF THE PRESIDENT OF THE COUNCIL OF MINISTERS MESSNER AND HIS DEPUTY SADOWSKI.

THE CHURCH AND SOLIDARNOSC HAVE TAKEN SO FAR A POSTURE OF SUBSTANTIAL CAUTION AND PLAY DOWN THE EVENT.

AS CONCERNS NEGOTIATIONS WITH THE INTERNATIONAL MILITARY FUND, JARUZELSKI WILL BE ABLE TO EXPLOIT THE NEGATIVE RESULTS OF THE VOTE TO CALL FOR A RELIEF OF THE PARTICULARLY HARD CONDITIONS PREVIOUSLY IMPOSED BY THE FUND.

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