

NATO SITUATION CENTRE
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NADA/ASSESSMENT/NOVEMBER 002/JIC/07150Z

THE FOLLOWING IS AN ASSESSMENT BY JIC.

POLAND (NATO CONFIDENTIAL).

1. THE SITUATION IN POLAND REMAINS VOLATILE. THE CONFRONTATION WITH THE TRADE UNION ORGANISATION SOLIDARNOSC (WHICH NOW CLAIMS A MEMBERSHIP OF 10 MILLION) REMAINS THE MOST PRESSING PROBLEM FACING THE POLISH LEADERSHIP.

2. THE VISIT OF THE POLISH LEADERS TO MOSCOW ON 30 OCTOBER WAS, ACCORDING TO ONE POLISH OFFICIAL, THE RESULT OF A POLISH INITIATIVE. THIS SEEMS QUITE LIKELY, THOUGH BOTH SIDES PROBABLY HAD AN INTEREST IN CLARIFYING MATTERS BEFORE THE CRUCIAL TALKS WITH THE TRADE UNIONS SCHEDULED

FOR THE FOLLOWING DAY. THE POLISH LEADERS NO DOUBT THOUGHT IT WOULD BE USEFUL TO REASSURE THE SOVIET LEADERS THAT NO UNACCEPTABLE CONCESSIONS WOULD BE MADE, WHILE UNDERLINING THE CONSTRAINTS ON THEIR FREEDOM OF MANOEUVRE; AND THEY MAY HAVE FELT THAT A VISIT TO MOSCOW WOULD STRENGTHEN THEIR POSITION IN THE NEGOTIATIONS. THE DISCUSSIONS IN MOSCOW APPEAR TO HAVE BEEN REASONABLY AMICABLE THOUGH THE COMMUNIQUE FAILED TO SIGNAL SPECIFIC SOVIET ENDORSEMENT OF THE PRESENT POLISH LEADERSHIP OR OF THE DECISIONS OF THE PLENUM. IT DID HOWEVER EXPRESS CONFIDENCE THAT THE COMMUNISTS AND WORKING PEOPLE OF POLAND WOULD BE ABLE TO RESOLVE THE ACUTE PROBLEMS FACING THEM.

3. GOVERNMENT AND UNION REPRESENTATIVES SEEM TO HAVE ENTERED NEGOTIATIONS THE FOLLOWING DAY IN FAIRLY SOBER MOOD. THE MODERATES IN THE SOLIDARNOSC LEADERSHIP HAD EARLIER DEFEATED A PROPOSAL FOR AN IMMEDIATE STRIKE OVER THE WARSAW COURTS AMENDMENTS TO THE UNION'S STATUTES, BUT HAD AGREED TO PUT 11 DEMANDS TO THE PRIME MINISTER. THESE INCLUDED RESTORATION OF THE UNION'S ORIGINAL STATUTES, PERMISSION TO PUBLISH ITS OWN NEWSPAPER AND BOOKS, ACCESS

TO RADIO AND TV, THE RELEASE BY THE CUSTOMS OF PRINTING EQUIPMENT SENT FROM ABROAD, A CHANGE IN PAY POLICY TO ALLOW WORKERS TO DECIDE ON HOW WAGE FUNDS SHOULD BE DIVIDED UP, REGISTRATION OF THE SOLIDARNOSC UNION OF FARMERS, REINSTATEMENT OF WORKERS IN ACCORDANCE WITH THE GDANSK AGREEMENT, AND IMPROVEMENT IN MARKET SUPPLIES AND THE INTRODUCTION OF MEAT RATIONING. THE

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GOVERNMENT ANNOUNCED THAT THE SUPREME COURT WOULD RULE ON THE STATUTES BY 10 NOVEMBER. A SOLIDARNOSC SPOKSMAN INDICATED THAT SOME COMPROMISE MIGHT BE REACHED INVOLVING ~~RE~~EDITING THE STATUTES BUT NOT NECESSARILY THE DELETION OF THE OFFENDING AMENDMENTS (WHICH CONCERN IN PARTICULAR THE LEADING ROLE OF THE PARTY). THE GOVERNMENT AGREED TO THE PUBLICATION OF A WEEKLY SOLIDARNOSC NEWSPAPER AND THE RELEASE OF THE PRINTING EQUIPMENT: OTHER MEDIA QUESTIONS ARE TO GO TO A WORKING GROUP. THE GOVERNMENT APPARENTLY GAVE LITTLE AWAY ON THE OTHER QUESTIONS, THOUGH SOME ARE TO BE THE SUBJECT OF FURTHER DISCUSSION.

4. THE TALKS WERE SUSPENDED AFTER 14 HOURS WITHOUT THE SIDES BEING ABLE TO AGREE ON A COMMUNIQUE EMBODYING PROGRESS SO FAR. THE DISCUSSIONS WILL PRESUMABLY BE RESUMED SHORTLY, THOUGH NO DATE HAS BEEN FIXED. SOLIDARNOSC LEADERS WERE REPORTED TO BE PLEASED AT WHAT THEY HAD BEEN OFFERED, BUT CONCERNED THAT NONE OF IT WAS IN WRITING. IT MAY WELL BE THAT THE TWO SIDES HAVE A RATHER DIFFERENT VIEW OF WHAT WAS AGREED: THIS COULD LEAD TO FURTHER DISSENSION AND MISUNDERSTANDING. SOLIDARNOSC IS CONTINUING PREPARATIONS FOR SELECTIVE STRIKES FROM 12 NOVEMBER IF A SATISFACTORY SOLUTION IS NOT REACHED.

5. SOVIET MEDIA COMMENT ON POLISH DEVELOPMENTS IS SPARSE. EAST GERMAN AND CZECHOSLOVAK COMMENT CONTINUES TO BE TOUGH AND STRIDENT. THE GDR HAS IMPOSED RESTRICTIONS ON TRAVEL TO AND FROM POLAND, AND THE CZECHOSLOVAKS ARE REPORTED TO BE CONSIDERING SOMETHING SIMILAR. THE MAIN EAST GERMAN AIM IS TO REDUCE THE AMOUNT OF CONTACT BETWEEN POLES AND EAST GERMANS AND HENCE THE SPREAD OF HERETICAL IDEAS, BUT ONE USEFUL SIDE-EFFECT WILL BE TO CURTAIL POLISH SHOPPING SPREES IN EAST GERMAN TOWNS, WHICH THE EAST GERMANS MUST FIND PARTICULARLY IRRITATING WHEN THEY ARE ALREADY HAVING TO DELIVER SOME OF THEIR OWN LIMITED

SUPPLIES OF FOODSTUFFS AND CONSUMER GOODS TO POLAND TO HELP MEET CONSUMER DEMAND THERE.

6. THE SITUATION IN THE POLISH PARTY IS STILL UNSETTLED, WITH THE PROCESS OF RENEWAL OF THE PARTY MACHINE AT THE REGIONAL LEVEL CONTINUING. THERE ARE SIGNS TOO THAT POTENTIALLY INFLUENTIAL ORGANISATIONS OUTSIDE THE COMMUNIST PARTY, SUCH AS THE WAR VETERANS ORGANISATION AND THE PEASANTS PARTY, MIGHT TAKE ADVANTAGE OF THE PRESENT CONFUSION TO MAKE A BID FOR GREATER POLITICAL INFLUENCE. ECONOMIC PROBLEMS ARE ACUTE AND THE CONSUMER SUPPLY SITUATION IS DETERIORATING. ALTHOUGH THE ANGER AROUSED INITIALLY IN SOLIDARNOSC BY THE COURTS ACTION OVER ITS STATUTES HAS ABATED SOMEWHAT, UNION RELATIONS WITH THE AUTHORITIES REMAIN UNEASY. THE REGIME IS RESUMING ITS EARLIER CONCILIATORY LINE, PROBABLY IN THE HOPE THAT THIS WILL AVERT THE THREAT OF A GENERAL STRIKE, STRENGTHEN THE MODERATE WING OF SOLIDARNOSC, AND LEAD TO THE CO-OPERATION WITH THE UNIONS NECESSARY TO ECONOMIC RECOVERY AND POLITICAL STABILITY. THE BALANCE IS HOWEVER FINE, AND THE SITUATION COULD DETERIORATE SHARPLY IF THE

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SUPREME COURT DECISION PROVES UNACCEPTABLE TO SOLIDARNOSC.
SELECTIVE STRIKES FROM 12 NOVEMBER CANNOT BE RULED OUT.
THE MOSCOW VISIT MAY HAVE GIVEN KANIA A BREATHING-SPACE
IN WHICH TO TRY AND PROVE THAT HIS POLICIES WILL WORK:
BUT THE RUSSIANS WILL BE WATCHING DEVELOPMENTS IN POLAND
WITH THE UTMOST CONCERN.
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