

NATO SITUATION CENTRE  
CENTRE DE SITUATION OTAN

COMCENTRE NAC/MC

Number: 155 - 157

Date : 23 December 1980

NATO SECRET

PRIORITY

Reg. PA

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P.A. Sub-Registry

File No 19-10-01

(Poland)

SUBJECT: POLAND UPDATE ASSESSMENT

1. (NS) WE HAVE SEEN NO MAJOR DIMINUTION OF THE ADVANCED STATE OF READINESS OF THE SOVIET AND WARSAW PACT FORCES IN AND AROUND POLAND IN THE LAST 72 HOURS. HOWEVER, SOME OF THE NATIONS HAVE REPORTED TO US A POSSIBLE LESSENING OF TENSION IN THE OVERALL DOMESTIC SITUATION, BUT NOT IN THE COMBAT READINESS OF THE FORCES WHICH WOULD BE USED TO INTERVENE IN POLAND SHOULD THAT DECISION BE MADE TO DO SO. ON THE OPPOSITE SIDE OF THE SCALE, WE CONTINUE TO SEE SIGNS THAT MOBILIZATION ACTIVITIES/COMBAT READINESS OF THE SOVIET FORCES IN AND AROUND POLAND CONTINUES TO IMPROVE, ALBEIT AT A REDUCED PACE TO THAT OF THREE WEEKS AGO.

2. (NS) ORBAT:

THERE IS GOOD EVIDENCE THAT THE NUMBER OF QUOTE READY UNQUOTE SOVIET DIVISIONS AROUND POLAND HAVE INCREASED AS SOME, LOW CATEGORY CADRE DIVISIONS HAVE BEEN UPGRADED TO QUOTE READY UNQUOTE STATUS.

THERE IS ALSO EVIDENCE OF UNUSUAL ACTIVITIES IN SOME OF THE EXISTING QUOTE READY UNQUOTE DIVISIONS.

BACK-UP ACTIVITY ( CALL UP AND WARNING OF RESERVISTS, PLUS UNSEASONAL EXERCISING) IS ALSO REPORTED FROM NSWP UNITS OF GDR AND CZECH UNITS.

3. (NS) TRAINING PATTERNS:

IN AN ATTEMPT TO COMPARE THE CURRENT STATE OF COMBAT READINESS AND TRAINING ACTIVITY WITH THAT OF THE SAME TIMEFRAME OF PROCEEDING YEARS, WE HAVE MADE A BRIEF STUDY OF THE PREVIOUS TWO YEARS. THIS ANALYSIS HAS REVEALED THAT IN VERY GENERAL TERMS THE STATUS OF THE OVERALL TRAINING/READINESS POSTURE OF THE SOVIET WARSAW PACT FORCES WHICH COULD BE USED IN AN INTERVENTION ROLE IN POLAND IS NOT SIGNIFICANTLY DIFFERENT NOW FROM IN THE PAST, EXCEPT FOR A LARGER EXERCISE CONDUCTED EARLIER THAN EXPECTED IN THE CSSR AND ADDITIONAL READINESS POSTURE OF SOME DIVISIONS IN THE WESTERN MILITARY DISTRICTS. A MARKED EXCEPTION TO THE NORMALCY OF TRAINING WHICH VIVIDLY STANDS OUT IS THE CURRENT STATE OF THE COMMAND AND CONTROL COMMUNICATION SYSTEM AND THE EXTENSIVE WORK-UP AND MAINTENANCE OF THIS SYSTEM TO A DEGREE WHICH HAD NOT BEEN NOTED IN PREVIOUS YEARS.

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## 4. (NS) CURRENT EVIDENCE OF LESSENING TENSION:

THE LESSENING OF DOMESTIC TENSIONS THAT HAS BEEN REPORTED TO US MIGHT BE ILLUSTRATED BY THE FOLLOWING:

- RECENT OFFICIAL PRESS STATEMENTS BY THE SOVIETS WHICH INDICATED THAT THEY WILL NOT INTERVENE IN POLAND.
- CURRENTLY THE SITUATION WITHIN POLAND IS THAT THE UNION FACTIONS, THE CHURCH AND THE OFFICIAL PARTY, DESPITE THEIR PUBLIC DIFFERENCES, ARE APPARENTLY MAKING CONCERTED EFFORTS AT WORKING TOGETHER IN A FORM OF QUOTE NATIONAL UNQUOTE HARMONY.
- THE SUCCESSFUL COMMEMORATION CEREMONIES OF THE ANNIVERSARY OF THE 1970 FOOD RIOTS AND SUBSEQUENT KILLINGS OF POLISH CIVILIANS BY THE ARMY.
- NO STRIKES FOR THE PAST SIX WEEKS.

## 5. (NS) INTERNAL INDICATORS OF INCREASING TENSION:

ADDITIONALLY, WE HAVE NOT SEEN WHAT WE CONSIDER TO BE THE NECESSARY INDICATIONS OF A MORE TENSE DOMESTIC SITUATION WHICH WOULD GIVE THE SOVIETS SUFFICIENT PROVOCATION TO INTERVENE, IF INDEED THEY REQUIRE SUCH PROVOCATION. THESE AND OTHER RELATED INDICATORS ARE:

- MASS ARRESTS OF POLISH DISSIDENTS
- CIRCUMSTANCES WHICH COULD LEAD TO AN ADVERSE DECISION BY THE COURT ON 30 DEC 80, NOT ALLOWING THE PRIVATE FARMERS TO REGISTER AND ORGANIZE INTO A UNION.
- SUBSTANTIAL ADDITIONAL SHORTAGES OF FOOD AND FUEL CULMINATING IN SEVERE RATIONING PROCEDURES BEING IMPLEMENTED.
- CURTAILMENT OF SOLIDARITY ACTIVITIES.
- ADVERSE PROPAGANDA AGAINST THE SOVIET UNION FOR MAINTAINING FORCES ON THE BORDERS OF POLAND IN A HIGH STATE OF READINESS POISED TO POSSIBLY INTERVENE IN AFFAIRS OF THE COUNTRY.
- INCLUDING THE COMMUNIST PARTYS SUPERIORITY IN SOLIDARITYS BASIC DECLARATION WHICH COULD COME TO A CONFRONTATION IN JANUARY.
- BREAKDOWN OF LAW AND ORDER CAUSED BY ONE OR ALL OF THE ABOVE.
- REQUEST FROM THE POLES TO THE SOVIETS TO INTERVENE.
- A SOVIET INITIATED NOMINATION OF A QUOTE KAMAL TYPE UNQUOTE TOP LEADER IN WARSAW TO FACILITATE A CALL FOR WP SUPPORT AGAINST ANTI-SOCIALIST INFLUENCE.

## 6. (NC) DECEPTION:

A COMPLICATING FACTOR IN THE WHOLE EQUATION OF CAPABILITIES AND INTENTIONS OVER POLAND AND ONE THAT MUST BE TAKEN INTO CONSIDERATION IS THE USE OF DECEPTION AS A FACTOR IN SOVIET MILITARY PLANNING. SOVIET GENERAL STAFF PLANNERS TRADITIONALLY A SCRIBE MORE WEIGHT TO DELIBERATE DECEPTION THAN THEIR WESTERN COUNTERPARTS. EXAMPLES OF THIS COORDINATED DECEPTION PLANNING AT THE HIGHEST LEVEL CAN BE CLEARLY SEEN IN HUNGARY 1956, WHEN THE SOVIETS NEGOTIATED A CEASE-FIRE AND WITHDREW THEIR ARMOUR FROM BUDAPEST AFTER THE FIRST PHASE, AND IN CZECHOSLOVAKIA 1968, WHEN THE WARSAW PACT QUOTE OCCUPIED UNQUOTE THE COUNTRY IN MAY UNDER THE GUISE OF AN EXERCISE. THEY THEN WITHDREW COMPLETELY, OFFERED TO SIGN AN AGREEMENT WITH THE DUBCEK GOVERNMENT AND THEN STRUCK DURING THE PERIOD OF RELAXED TENSION. IT THEREFORE COULD FOLLOW THAT THE PERIOD OF GREATEST DANGER PARADOXICALLY MIGHT BE THAT FOLLOWING A SOVIET POLITICAL GESTURE OF RECONCILIATION COUPLED WITH SOME PUBLIC DEMOBILIZATION OF UNITS.

7. (NS) ASSESSMENT:

WE ASSESS THAT THE SOVIETS REMAIN AT AN ADVANCED STATE OF COMBAT READINESS IN AND AROUND POLAND. THEY HAVE THE CAPABILITY TO INTERVENE MILITARILY WITH AN INITIAL FORCE OF UP TO 25 DIVISIONS WITH LITTLE OR NO WARNING, SUPPORTED BY A SECOND ECHELON AT 36/48 HOURS NOTICE TO MOVE. HOWEVER, BEFORE SUCH A MOVE, WE WOULD ANTICIPATE SOME LEAD TIME WITH A NUMBER OF INDICATORS STEMMING FROM WITHIN POLAND ITSELF AND TIED TO THE DOMESTIC SCENE. THESE INDICATORS ARE CURRENTLY NOT PRESENT THANKS TO A RELATIVE LESSENING OF TENSION, ALTHOUGH THE INTERNAL POLISH SITUATION STILL REMAINS TENSE AND WILL CONTINUE TO REFLECT THE CONTRADICTIONS WITHIN POLISH SOCIETY DURING THE COMING 14 DAYS AT LEAST. WE FEEL THAT THE EXAMINATION OF THESE INTERNAL INDICATORS REMAINS OUR BEST WAY OF ANALYSING SOVIET INTENTIONS DURING THE CRITICAL PERIOD, AS THEY ARE THE VERY FACTORS THAT THE SOVIETS THEMSELVES WILL USE TO MAKE AN INTERVENTION DECISION, UNLESS IT HAS ALREADY BEEN TAKEN. THIS PRESENT LACK OF CONFRONTATION ON THE POLISH DOMESTIC SCENE MAY LEAD TO THE SUGGESTION THAT THE PROSPECT OF IMMEDIATE SOVIET MILITARY INTERVENTION HAS RECEDED. WE NOW ASSESS THAT WE COULD HAVE 24 TO 48 HOURS WARNING BASED ON THE INTERNAL SITUATION OF ANY IMPENDING SOVIET INTERVENTION, UNLESS THE DECISION HAS PREVIOUSLY BEEN MADE BY THE SOVIETS TO INTERVENE AT A TIME AND SITUATION OF THEIR CHOOSING IN WHICH CASE WE COULD HAVE LITTLE OR NO WARNING.

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