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COMCENTRE NAC/MC

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File No 19-10-01 (Poland)

NADA/ASSESSMENT/MAR 004/JIC/061320Z
THE FOLLOWING IS AN ASSESSMENT BY JIC
POLAND

1. A NUMBER OF MINOR INCIDENTS HAVE RUFFLED THE SURFACE CALM IN POLAND. THE UNDERLYING TENSIONS REMAIN AND MUCH WILL DEPEND ON FORTHCOMING NEGOTIATIONS BETWEEN THE GOVERNMENT AND UNIONS. THE SOVIET LEADERSHIP SEEMS TO BE PRESSING FOR FIRMER ACTION FROM THE POLISH AUTHORITIES.
2. THE NEW GOVERNMENT HAS SO FAR CONCENTRATED MOST OF ITS ATTENTION ON ECONOMIC MATTERS, BUT THE PROMISED TALKS WITH SOLIDARNOSC MUST BEGIN SOON IF THE REGIME'S COMMITMENT TO A PROCESS OF CONCILIATION AND NEGOTIATION IS TO REMAIN CREDIBLE. THE UNION'S NATIONAL CONSULTATIVE COMMITTEE HAS DRAWN UP A LIST OF SUBJECTS TO BE COVERED IN THE TALKS, AND THE LINE TO BE ADOPTED BY ITS NEGOTIATORS. THE ISSUES CONSIDERED MOST URGENT ARE STRIKE PAY, THE TRADE UNION AND CENSORSHIP LAWS, LAW AND ORDER, HEALTH SERVICE BUILDINGS, THE UNION ACCESS TO THE MASS MEDIA. THE LAST IS ALREADY CAUSING PROBLEMS: AGREEMENT HAS YET TO BE REACHED ON THE ORGANISATION OF THE PROMISED RADIO AND TELEVISION PROGRAMMES AND THE FIRST ISSUE OF THE SOLIDARNOSC WEEKLY NATIONAL NEWSPAPER HAS SO FAR FAILED TO APPEAR. AN ARTICLE IN THE MAIN PARTY DAILY ON 27 FEBRUARY ACCUSING THE EDITORS OF THE SOLIDARNOSC PAPER IN SZCZECIN OF "ARROGANCE, CHEAP DEMAGOGY, FANNING DISQUIET AND POLITICAL BLINDNESS" WAS CLEARLY A WARNING TO OTHERS INVOLVED IN SOLIDARNOSC PUBLICATIONS AND PROGRAMMES. ACCORDING TO PRESS REPORTS SOLIDARNOSC WISHES TO DISCUSS WITH THE GOVERNMENT THE INDEPENDENCE OF THE LAW COURTS AND BRINGING THE SECURITY APPARATUS UNDER THE RULE OF LAW. THIS IS A SENSITIVE AREA WHICH THE REGIME WILL NOT WISH TO BE SEEN EVEN DISCUSSING WITH THE UNION, THOUGH THE LATTER WILL NO DOUBT ARGUE THAT IT IS DIRECTLY RELEVANT TO ITS OWN ACTIVITIES.
3. THERE ARE NO STRIKES IN PROGRESS IN POLAND AT PRESENT, A BRIEF SIT-IN BY STUDENTS IN OLSZTYN HAVING BEEN ENDED

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N A T O S E C R E T

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WITH A GUARANTEE OF BETTER ACCOMMODATION. HOWEVER A NUMBER OF STRIKES ARE THREATENED IN DIFFERENT PARTS OF THE COUNTRY OVER LOCAL GRIEVANCES. THESE INCLUDE A STRIKE ALERT IN LODZ REGION IN SUPPORT OF A DEMAND FOR THE REINSTATEMENT OF 5 SACKED WORKERS, ON WHICH THE REGIME HAS REFUSED TO NEGOTIATE. THESE INCIDENTS ARE NOT LIKELY TO CAUSE THE REGIME SERIOUS PROBLEMS. THERE MUST HOWEVER BE GREAT CONCERN OVER THE CONTINUING FERMENT IN THE PARTY. TWO NOTABLE DEVELOPMENTS ARE THE SPREAD OF "HORIZONTALISM", IE THE LINKING OF PARTY ORGANISATIONS AT THE SAME LEVEL, WHICH IS CONTRARY TO THE STRICT PARTY PRINCIPLE OF LINKS ONLY BETWEEN HIGHER AND SUBORDINATE LEVELS; AND THE HOLDING OF GENUINELY DEMOCRATIC ELECTIONS, WITH SECRET BALLOTS AND NOMINATIONS FROM THE FLOOR, TO THE PARTY COMMITTEE AT THE GDANSK SHIP-YARDS. THE LATTER PROCESS WAS APPROVED BY THE REGIONAL PARTY SECRETARY FISZBACH, A MEMBER OF THE POLITBURO AND LEADING ADVOCATE OF REFORM. PARTY SECRETARY OLSZOWSKI PROBABLY HAD SUCH DEVELOPMENTS IN MIND WHEN HE STRESSED THE PRINCIPLE OF DEMOCRATIC CENTRALISM AND ATTACKED "REFORMISM" IN A NEWSPAPER INTERVIEW ON 27 FEBRUARY.

4. ACCORDING TO THE COMMUNIQUE ISSUED AFTER A MEETING IN MOSCOW BETWEEN KANIA AND JARUZELSKI AND BREZHNEV AND 5 OTHER MEMBERS OF THE SOVIET POLITBURO ON 4 MARCH, THE POLISH LEADERS REPORTED ON "MEASURES TAKEN TO OVERCOME THE SERIOUS THREAT" TO POLAND AND UNDERTOOK TO PRESS FOR "THE FULL OVERCOMING OF ANARCHY AND DISARRAY". THE SOVIET LEADERS PROMISED SUPPORT AND EXPRESSED CONFIDENCE THAT THE POLISH PARTY HAD "THE CAPABILITY AND STRENGTH TO TURN ("REVERSE" IN THE POLISH VERSION) THE COURSE OF EVENTS AND ELIMINATE THE DANGERS THREATENING THE SOCIALIST GAINS OF THE POLISH PEOPLE". BREZHNEV DOCTRINE LANGUAGE WAS AGAIN USED TO JUSTIFY SOVIET

AND WARSAW PACT CONCERN AND SUPPORT.

5. THE APPARENT DIFFERENCE IN WORDING IN THE SOVIET AND POLISH VERSIONS OF THE COMMUNIQUE IS PUZZLING, THOUGH THE POLISH LEADERSHIP MAY FIND IT HELPFUL TO INDICATE THAT IT IS UNDER PRESSURE FROM THE SOVIET UNION NOT MERELY TO STABILISE THE SITUATION IN POLAND, BUT TO REVERSE CERTAIN TRENDS. IN ANY EVENT THE SOVIET UNION CLEARLY REMAINS DISSATISFIED WITH DEVELOPMENTS IN POLAND, AND IS PROBABLY ADVOCATING FIRMER ACTION AGAINST "ANTI-SOCIALIST ELEMENTS" AND A HARDER LINE ON STRIKES. THIS DOES NOT NECESSARILY MEAN HOWEVER THAT IT IS INSISTING ON SPECIFIC ACTION WITHIN ANY FIXED TIMESCALE. ON THE WHOLE WE THINK IT LIKELY THAT THE POLISH LEADERSHIP, WHILE OFFERING ASSURANCES TO ITS ALLIES, WILL CONTINUE GENERALLY TO ATTEMPT TO RESOLVE ITS DIFFICULTIES BY NEGOTIATION. AT THE SAME TIME IT MAY ADOPT A SOMEWHAT HARDER TONE IN PUBLIC AND SHOWING FIRMNESS WHERE THIS CAN BE DONE WITHOUT PROVOKING A SHARP AND WIDESPREAD REACTION. AN OUTBREAK OF STRIKES ALONG THE LINES OF THAT IN JULY WOULD HOWEVER BE SEEN AS DEMANDING TOUGHER ACTION.

6. PREPARATIONS ARE IN HAND FOR A JOINT EXERCISE TO TAKE PLACE LATER THIS MONTH; THERE IS NO EVIDENCE TO CONFIRM PRESS REPORTS THAT JOINT MANOEUVRES ARE ALREADY UNDER WAY. THE EXERCISE IS HOWEVER ALMOST CERTAIN TO INVOLVE FEWER THAN 25,000 TROOPS AND WILL THEREFORE NOT NEED TO BE REPORTED UNDER CSCE PROVISIONS.

7. SOLIDARNOSC IS USING THE PRESENT LULL TO CARRY OUT ELECTIONS, ORGANISE ITS ADMINISTRATION AND FINANCES AND FORGE LINKS WITH WESTERN TRADE UNION ORGANISATIONS. THE AUTHORITIES FOR THEIR PART ARE TRYING TO LAY THE GROUNDWORK FOR A REVIVAL OF THE ECONOMY. ANY REALISTIC ECONOMIC PLAN IS LIKELY TO DEMAND SACRIFICES ON THE PART OF THE WORKERS, WHICH SOLIDARNOSC WILL RESIST. THE GOVERNMENT MAY WELL FACE PRESSURE FOR CONCESSIONS IN OTHER, POLITICALLY SENSITIVE AREAS IF IT IS TO SECURE ACQUIESCENCE IN STRINGENT ECONOMIC MEASURES. MOSCOW IS CLEARLY PRESSING FOR A HARDER LINE, BUT THE ADOPTION OF SUCH A POLICY COULD JEOPARDISE THE FRAGILE BALANCE IN POLAND.