

NATO SITUATION CENTRE
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NADA/ASSESSMENT/AUGUST 003/JIC/211430Z
THE FOLLOWING IS AN ASSESSMENT BY JIC
POLAND (NATO CONFIDENTIAL)

1. THE CRIMEA MEETING OF SOVIET AND POLISH LEADERS ON 14 AUGUST APPEARS TO HAVE PRODUCED QUALIFIED SOVIET ENDORSEMENT FOR CURRENT POLISH POLICIES. WITHIN POLAND THERE IS A LULL IN PROTEST ACTIVITIES, BUT THE ECONOMIC SITUATION CONTINUES TO DETERIORATE.
2. THE COMMUNIQUE ISSUED AFTER BREZHNEV'S TALKS WITH KANIA AND JARUZELSKI ON 14 AUGUST SUGGESTS THAT THE MEETING WAS LESS ACRIMONIOUS THAN SOME EARLIER HIGH-LEVEL MEETINGS, THOUGH THERE WAS CERTAINLY DISAGREEMENT ON SOME ISSUES. THE POLISH LEADERS SHOWED THEIR WILLINGNESS TO MEET SOVIET CONCERNS BY STRESSING THAT ONE OF THEIR PRIORITIES WAS THAT OF PREVENTING ANARCHY AND STRUGGLING AGAINST THE THREAT OF COUNTER-REVOLUTION. THE SOVIET RESPONSE WAS PROBABLY CAUTIOUS; THE COMMUNIQUE REFERS TO THE SOVIET UNION'S "WISH", RATHER THAN CONVICTION, THAT THE DECISIONS OF THE JULY PARTY CONGRESS, ACKNOWLEDGED AS AIMED AT STRENGTHENING THE PARTY AND SOCIALISM IN POLAND, SHOULD BE SUCCESSFULLY CARRIED OUT. THIS NEVERTHELESS REPRESENTS THE MOST AUTHORITATIVE INDICATION SO FAR THAT THE DECISIONS OF THE PARTY CONGRESS ARE REGARDED IN MOSCOW AS BEING AT LEAST TOLERABLE. THERE IS NO REFERENCE IN THE COMMUNIQUE TO A NEED FOR DIFFERENT POLICIES ALONG THE LINES OF EARLIER CALLS FOR "TURNING THE COURSE OF EVENTS", AND ONLY THE OBLIQUEST POSSIBLE REFERENCE TO THE BREZHNEV DOCTRINE. ALTHOUGH BREZHNEV IS REPORTED TO HAVE WARNED THAT THE SOVIET UNION WOULD BE FOLLOWING THE SITUATION CAREFULLY, THE OVERALL TONE OF THE COMMUNIQUE IS NOT MANAGING. THERE ARE NO SIGNS OF PREPARATIONS FOR SOVIET MILITARY INTERVENTION IN POLAND IN THE NEAR FUTURE; IT IS NOT THOUGHT THAT THE LARGE-SCALE EXERCISE SCHEDULED TO TAKE PLACE IN THE WESTERN USSR IS DIRECTLY CONNECTED WITH THE INTERNAL SITUATION IN POLAND.
3. THE COMMUNIQUE ALSO NOTES THAT THE SOVIET UNION WILL DEFER POLISH DEBT REPAYMENT UNTIL THE 1986-90 PLAN PERIOD, SUPPLY ADDITIONAL RAW MATERIALS FOR LIGHT INDUSTRY AND CERTAIN CONSUMER GOODS, AND CO-OPERATE IN MAKING BETTER USE OF POLISH INDUSTRIAL FACILITIES. THIS CONSTITUTES REAFFIRMATION OF EARLIER SOVIET UNDERTAKINGS, AND IT IS NOT CLEAR THAT ANY NEW COMMITMENT IS INVOLVED. THE STATEMENT MAY BE INTENDED PARTLY AS AN ACKNOWLEDGEMENT OF POLISH GRATITUDE FOR SOVIET GENEROSITY AS WELL AS TO PERSUADE WESTERN GOVERNMENTS

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THAT THE SOVIET UNION IS MAKING A MAJOR EFFORT TO EASE POLAND'S ECONOMIC PROBLEMS AND ENCOURAGE THEM TO DO LIKEWISE.

4. THE CRIMEA TALKS MAY HAVE BEEN EASED BY THE RELATIVELY CONCILIATORY STANCE ADOPTED BY THE SOLIDARNOSC LEADERSHIP LAST WEEK AND THE SUBSEQUENT CALLING OFF OF MOST PLANNED PROTESTS, AND BY PLANS FOR A SERIES OF OFFICIAL MEASURES TO TIGHTEN DISCIPLINE. MEASURES SO FAR CARRIED OUT INCLUDE AN INSTRUCTION TO FACTORY MANAGERS NOT TO TOLERATE BREACHES OF LABOUR DISCIPLINE AND TO DEDUCT PAY FOR UNJUSTIFIED STRIKES; THE CLOSING DOWN OF A PRINTING SHOP IN KATOWICE WHICH PERSISTED IN PRINTING ALLEGEDLY ANTI-SOVIET LEAFLETS; AND, IN THE ECONOMIC SPHERE, A BAN ON FREE MARKET SALES OF MEAT AND THE CONTINUATION OF REDUCED MEAT RATIONS INTO SEPTEMBER. MEASURES DIRECTED SPECIFICALLY AGAINST THE PLANNED MARCH IN DEFENCE OF POLITICAL PRISONERS INCLUDED AN OUTRIGHT BAN IN ONE AREA OF A NATIONWIDE ORDER FORBIDDING THE USE OF OFFICIAL VEHICLES FOR UNOFFICIAL PURPOSES. IN THE LIGHT OF APPEALS FROM SOLIDARNOSC AND THE CHURCH, AS WELL AS THE GOVERNMENT'S PREPARATIONS FOR CONFRONTATION, THE MARCH WAS FINALLY CALLED OFF BY ITS ORGANISERS. THE CHURCH'S CALLS FOR RESTRAINT AND MODERATION HAVE BEEN ACCOMPANIED BY SUPPORT FOR SOLIDARNOSC'S POSITION ON KEY ISSUES SUCH AS WORKERS' SELF-MANAGEMENT AND ACCESS TO THE MEDIA.

5. THE 2-DAY PRINTERS' STRIKE WAS UNPRECEDENTED IN EASTERN EUROPE. SOLIDARNOSC SUCCEEDED IN PREVENTING THE APPEARANCE OF MOST NEWSPAPERS, BUT THE AUTHORITIES MANAGED TO GET OUT SEVERAL REGIONAL PAPERS AND THE MAIN PARTY AND ARMY DAILIES, ALBERT IN SMALL EDITIONS, AND WAS ABLE TO MAKE PROPAGANDA CAPITAL OUT OF THE CLEARLY POLITICAL STRIKE. NO FURTHER MAJOR STRIKES ARE PLANNED, THOUGH SPORADIC LOCALISED ACTION CAN BE EXPECTED. TOUGH GOVERNMENT MEASURES COULD ALSO LEAD TO A SHARP UNION REACTION. NEVERTHELESS THE PROSPECTS ARE FOR AT LEAST A TEMPORARY LULL IN STRIKES AND PROTESTS.

6. THE REGIME'S POSITION HAS THUS IMPROVED SOMEWHAT IN THE LAST WEEK. THE CRIMEA VISIT WENT REASONABLY WELL, SOLIDARNOSC HAS ADOPTED A MORE MODERATE STANCE, AND THE DANGER OF VIOLENT CLASHES ARISING FROM STREET DEMONSTRATIONS HAS BEEN AVERTED FOR THE MOMENT. MEANWHILE THE ECONOMIC POSITION REMAINS DIRE AND THE POTENTIAL FOR CONFRONTATION ON A WHOLE SERIES OF ISSUES REMAINS. IN THE PAST THE AUTHORITIES HAVE USED STRIKE LULLS NOT TO TAKE FRESH INITIATIVES TO GAIN THE CO-OPERATION OF SOLIDARNOSC AND AVOID FUTURE TROUBLE BUT TO TRY TO UNDERMINE THE POSITION OF THE REFORM MOVEMENT, A PROCESS WHICH HAS INEVITABLY LED TO RENEWED CLASHES. IT REMAINS TO BE SEEN WHETHER THIS TIME THEY WILL USE THE LULL TO MAKE A GENUINE EFFORT TO SECURE NATIONAL SUPPORT FOR THE TOUGH POLICIES NEEDED TO REVIVE THE COLLAPSING ECONOMY.

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