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NADA/ASSESSMENT/SEPTEMBER 001/JIC/101645Z
THE FOLLOWING IS AN ASSESSMENT BY JIC
POLAND (NATO CONFIDENTIAL)

(Poland)

1. THE FIRST STAGE OF SOLIDARITY'S CONGRESS HAS BEEN MARKED BY MILITANT SPEECHES AND RESOLUTIONS, BUT HAS SO FAR PRODUCED NO CLEAR INDICATION OF THE LINE LIKELY TO BE ENDORSED AT THE SECOND AND MORE IMPORTANT STAGE SCHEDULED TO START ON 26 SEPTEMBER. CERTAIN DEVELOPMENTS WILL HAVE GREATLY ALARMED SOVIET AND EAST EUROPEAN LEADERS. IN THE LAST WEEK NEITHER THE UNION NOR THE AUTHORITIES HAVE SHOWN ANY SIGN OF YIELDING OVER THE KEY ISSUES OF ACCESS TO RADIO AND TV AND WORKERS' SELF-MANAGEMENT. A NUMBER OF STRIKES HAVE BEEN SUSPENDED UNTIL AFTER THE SOLIDARITY CONGRESS BUT OTHER DISPUTES ARE CONTINUING.
2. THE FIRST STAGE OF THE SOLIDARITY CONGRESS, ORIGINALLY SCHEDULED TO LAST 3 DAYS AND END ON 7 SEPTEMBER, IS STILL IN PROGRESS. THE MOST IMPORTANT ITEMS OF THE AGENDA WERE THE REPORT OF THE NATIONAL CONSULTATIVE COMMISSION (NCC) ON THE UNION'S ACTIVITIES SO FAR AND THE DEBATE ON CHANGES IN THE UNION'S STATUTES. WALESA'S OPENING SPEECH WAS MAINLY A ROUSING CALL FOR UNITY. THE NCC REPORT DESCRIBED THE UNION AS THE MAIN FORCE IN THE "REVOLUTION" NOW TAKING PLACE IN POLAND, A FORCE WHICH "CREATES AN OPPORTUNITY FOR SOCIAL EQUILIBRIUM IN WHICH MAN WILL BE PROTECTED AND THE AUTHORITIES EFFECTIVELY SUPERVISED". THE REPORT PLACED THE BLAME FOR POLAND'S DIFFICULTIES SQUARELY ON THE SHOULDERS OF THE REGIME. IT ALSO CALLED FOR RADIO AND TELEVISION TO BE PUBLICLY ACCOUNTABLE, WARNED OF INFLUENTIAL GROUPS OPPOSED TO REFORM REMAINING IN THE AUTHORITIES, AND ALLEGED THAT IN RECENT WEEKS THERE HAD BEEN A "SYSTEMATIC REVERSION TO THE OLD METHODS OF WIELDING POWER". NEVERTHELESS THE REPORT CAME DOWN IN FAVOUR OF DIALOGUE AND NEGOTIATION WITH THE AUTHORITIES. FRAGMENTARY REPORTS OF THE SUBSEQUENT DEBATE SUGGEST THERE WAS HEATED ARGUMENT ABOUT HOW FAR THE UNION SHOULD BE PREPARED TO CO-OPERATE WITH THE AUTHORITIES IN RESOLVING ECONOMIC PROBLEMS AND HOW FAR IT SHOULD PURSUE CONFRONTATION AS THE ONLY WAY OF PRESERVING THE UNION'S INFLUENCE AND WRINGING OUT FURTHER CONCESSIONS.
3. THE DEBATE ON THE UNION'S STATUTES FOCUSED ON THE QUESTION OF CENTRAL VERSUS REGIONAL CONTROL. MODERATES LIKE WALESA WANTED STRONG CENTRAL ORGANS WITH, FOR INSTANCE, A RIGHT TO VETO OVER STRIKES INVOLVING MORE

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THAN A SINGLE ENTERPRISE, WHILE RADICALS SOUGHT GRATER POWERS FOR THE REGIONAL BRANCHES, MANY OF WHICH ARE AT PRESENT UNDER RADICAL CONTROL. IN THE END THE CONGRESS OPTED FOR A COMPROMISE SOLUTION, THE COMPLEXITY OF WHICH SEEMS TO LEAVE AMPLE SCOPE FOR FUTURE WRANGLING. ONE INSTANCE AT LEAST TEMPORARY - FOR THE MODERATES WAS THE REJECTION OF A PROPOSAL TO DELETE FROM THE STATUTES REGONITION OF THE LEADING ROLE OF THE PARTY: BUT THIS ISSUE WILL PROBABLY BE RAISED AGAIN LATER IN THE CONGRESS.

4. THE DEBATE ON WORKERS' SELF-MANAGEMENT HAS BEEN TAKING PLACE AGAINST THE BACKGROUND OF THE DECISIONS OF THE PARTY PLENUM ON 2-3 SEPTEMBER. KANIA MADE IT CLEAR AT THE PLENUM THAT THE PARTY WOULD NOT RELINQUISH CONTROL OVER IMPORTANT APPOINTMENTS OR KEY ECONOMIC DECISIONS. AT THE SAME TIME THE RESOLUTION OF THE PLENUM SET OUT THE PARTY'S VIEW ON THE CENTRAL ISSUE OF HOW MANAGERS SHOULD BE CHOSEN, VIZ IN LARGE ENTERPRISES BY THE STATE AUTHORITIES SUBJECT TO THE APPROVAL OF THE WORKERS' COUNCIL, AND IN SMALL ENTERPRISES BY THE WORKERS' COUNCIL SUBJECT TO THE APPROVAL OF THE STATE AUTHORITIES. IN BOTH CASES A SHORT-LIST OF CANDIDATES WOULD BE DRAWN UP BY A COMMITTEE CONSISTING OF STATE, UNION AND OTHER REPRESENTATIVES AFTER AN OPEN COMPETITION AND ON THE BASIS OF PROFESSIONAL AND MANAGERIAL COMPETENCE. THE RESOLUTION ALSO PROPOSED THE ESTABLISHMENT OF A SEJM (PARLIAMENT) COMMISSION ON SELF-MANAGEMENT AND INITIATIVES BY PARTY COMMITTEES IN FACTORIES TO ORGANISE WORKERS' SELF-MANAGEMENT THERE - PRESUMABLY TO PRE-EMPT FURTHER SOLIDARITY ACTIVITIES IN THIS FIELD. THE SOLIDARITY CONGRESS HAS NOT SO FAR PUT FORWARD ANY CLEAR PROPOSALS ON HOW SELF-MANAGEMENT SHOULD BE ORGANISED BUT HAS CRITICISED THE GOVERNMENT DRAFT BILLS CURRENTLY BEFORE THE SEJM AND CALLED FOR A REFERENDUM BEFORE THEIR ADOPTION. (THOUGH IT WAS SUBSEQUENTLY MADE CLEAR THAT THE REFERENDUM RESOLUTION WAS NOT A FINAL DECISION OF THE CONGRESS.) IF THE SEJM WOULD NOT ORGANISE A REFERENDUM THE UNION THREATENED TO HOLD ONE OF ITS OWN AND TO BOYCOTT ANY WORKERS COUNCILS SET UP UNDER THE NEW LEGISLATION. A REFERENDUM AT SOLIDARITY'S BEHEST WOULD PLAINLY BE UNACCEPTABLE TO THE POLISH LEADERSHIP.

5. THE CONGRESS TOOK A NUMBER OF OTHER IMPORTANT DECISIONS. THE ONE WITH THE MOST FAR-REACHING IMPLICATIONS IS THE MESSAGE TO OTHER EAST EUROPEAN WORKERS EXPRESSING SUPPORT FOR THOSE TRYING TO SET UP FREE TRADE UNIONS IN THEIR COUNTRIES. THIS IS THE FIRST TIME SOLIDARITY HAS OPENLY SUGGESTED THAT THE UNION'S OWN EXPERIENCE HAS ANY RELEVANCE FOR OTHER COUNTRIES. THE CONGRESS ALSO SENT A MESSAGE OF SUPPORT TO POLISH COMMUNITIES ABROAD, PROMISING TO HELP DEFEND THEIR RIGHTS. OTHER RESOLUTIONS CALLED FOR THE SOLIDARITY LEADERSHIP TO EDIT NEW HISTORY BOOKS WHICH WOULD NOT GLOSS OVER AWKWARD PERIODS IN SOVIET-POLISH RELATIONS: THREATENED THE USE OF "ALL POSSIBLE MEANS" TO COUNTER THE BAN ON MEMBERSHIP OF SOLIDARITY FOR CIVILIAN EMPLOYEES OF THE DEFENCE AND INTERIOR MINISTRIES: AND CALLED FOR ACTION AGAINST THE CLOSING OF THE INVESTIGATION OF THE BYDGOSZCZ INCIDENT. THERE WERE CALLS FOR THE HOLDING OF FRESH SEJM ELECTIONS (NOT DUE IN THE NORMAL WAY UNTIL 1984) AND THE WARSAW BRANCH HAS PROPOSED "UNLIMITED AND UNRESTRICTED RIGHTS" IN THE CHOICE OF CANDIDATES FOR SEJM AND LOCAL COUNCIL ELECTIONS.

6. POLISH RADIO AND TELEVISION HAVE GIVEN REASONABLY FULL AND FACTUAL COVERAGE TO THE CONGRESS, ALTHOUGH THE READING OUT OF THE MESSAGE TO EAST EUROPEAN WORKERS WAS IMMEDIATELY FOLLOWED BY AN OFFICIAL DENOUNCIATION OF IT. RADIO AND TELEVISION TEAMS WERE NOT HOWEVER ALLOWED INTO THE CONGRESS HALL ITSELF AFTER THE GOVERNMENT AND SOLIDARITY FAILED TO REACH AGREEMENT ON RADIO AND TELEVISION COVERAGE: SOLIDARITY REFUSED TO GIVE AN UNDERTAKING TO CALL OFF THREATENED MEDIA STRIKES AND THE GOVERNMENT REFUSED TO GIVE SOLIDARITY SUFFICIENT SAY IN THE CONTENT OF REPORTING. THE GENERAL ISSUE OF MEDIA ACCESS IS LIKELY TO BE TAKEN UP AGAIN AFTER THE CONGRESS. THE AUTHORITIES ARE REPORTEDLY TAKING STEPS TO TRAIN MILITARY AND OTHER PERSONNEL TO RUN THE BROADCASTING SYSTEM IN CASE OF A STRIKE.

7. ARCHBISHOP GLEMP AND SOME UNION LEADERS HAVE CALLED FOR INDUSTRIAL PEACE IN SEPTEMBER, AND A NUMBER OF STRIKES HAVE BEEN SUSPENDED UNTIL AFTER THE CONGRESS. THE AUTHORITIES HAVE MADE CONCESSIONS ON A FEW ISSUES, NOTABLY THAT OF REDRESS FOR RADOM WORKERS WHO SUFFERED AFTER THE 1976 RIOTS. BUT OVERALL THEY ARE CONTINUING TO TAKE A HARD LINE. THE CLOSING OF THE BYDGOSZCZ INVESTIGATION, SHORTLY BEFORE A SEJM COMMISSION WAS TO DISCUSS THE MATTER, SEEMS TO HAVE BEEN A DELIBERATE DISPLAY OF TOUGHNESS ON THE EVE OF THE SOLIDARITY CONGRESS, AS DOES THE RELEASE BY THE POLISH NEWS AGENCY OF A NEW VERSION OF KANIA'S CLOSING SPEECH AT THE RECENT PLENUM IN WHICH HE REFUSED TO RULE OUT THE POSSIBLE IMPOSITION OF A STATE OF EMERGENCY IF THIS WERE NEEDED IN ORDER TO DEFEND SOCIALISM. THE DEPUTY MINISTER OF THE INTERIOR WENT OUT OF HIS WAY AT THE PLENUM TO STRESS THE NUMBER OF ARRESTS AND OTHER MEASURES TAKEN TO REIMPOSE LAW AND ORDER IN THE COUNTRY. THIS HARD LINE WAS NO DOUBT INTENDED TO REASSURE MOSCOW THAT THE POLISH LEADERSHIP WAS FOLLOWING SOVIET ADVICE. IT MAY ALSO HAVE BEEN INTENDED TO INDUCE MODERATION AT THE SOLIDARITY CONGRESS, IN WHICH CASE IT SEEMS SO FAR TO HAVE FAILED. BUT THERE MAY WELL BE THOSE IN THE POLISH LEADERSHIP WHO CALCULATE THAT A HARD LINE WILL PRODUCE GREATER MILITANCY IN THE UNION, WHICH CAN THEN BE USED TO DISCREDIT THE MOVEMENT AS A WHOLE AND JUSTIFY HARSHER ACTION AGAINST THE ORGANISATION AND INDIVIDUAL ACTIVISTS.

8. THE FIRST SOVIET COMMENT ON THE SOLIDARITY CONGRESS, A TASS COMMENTARY, ACCUSED THOSE RUNNING THE CONGRESS OF BEING OUT TO SEIZE POLITICAL POWER AND TO UNDERMINE WORKERS' FAITH IN THE SOCIALIST STATE. IT CLAIMED THAT FEWER THAN 25 PER CENT OF DELEGATES WERE WORKERS AND THAT 190 (OUT OF NEARLY 900) WERE SUPPORTERS OF THE DISSIDENT ORGANISATION KOR OR KPN. FURTHER HARSH COMMENT CAN BE EXPECTED. MOSCOW IS LIKELY TO BE PARTICULARLY ANGRY ABOUT THE MESSAGES TO EAST EUROPEAN WORKERS, ABOUT WHAT THEY WILL REGARD AS THE ANTI-SOVIET AND ANTI-SOCIALIST TENOR OF SOME OF THE SPEECHES, AND ABOUT OTHER REPORTS THAT SOLIDARITY HAS OPENED AN OFFICE IN NEW YORK WITH THE HELP OF UNITED STATES UNIONS INCLUDING THE AFL-CIO. ALTHOUGH WE DO NOT BELIEVE THE MESSAGE TO EAST EUROPEAN WORKERS IS LIKELY TO HAVE ANY IMMEDIATE EFFECT ON THE LATTER, IT WILL PRODUCE A STRONG REACTION FROM EAST EUROPEAN LEADERS (A CZECHOSLOVAK PAPER HAS ALREADY DESCRIBED IT AS AN ATTEMPT TO EXPORT COUNTER-REVOLUTION) AND MAKE THEM

PUT STRONGER PRESSURE ON THE SOVIET LEADERSHIP TO INSIST ON SOME CURBING OF SOLIDARITY ACTIVITIES.

9. IN THE THREE WEEKS BEFORE THE SECOND AND FINAL STAGE OF THE SOLIDARITY CONGRESS WORKING GROUPS WILL BE DRAWING UP DRAFT POLICY DOCUMENTS AND REGIONAL BRANCHES WILL BE CONSIDERING THEIR POSITIONS. IT IS TOO SOON TO JUDGE WHAT LINE WILL FINALLY EMERGE, BUT FOR THE MOMENT THE DELEGATES APPEAR TO BE IN AGGRESSIVE MOOD. IF THIS CONTINUES, THERE IS LIKELY TO BE A FURTHER HARDENING OF ATTITUDES ON THE SIDE OF THE REGIME WHICH WILL MAKE RESOLUTION OF POLAND'S PROBLEMS EVEN MORE DIFFICULT TO ACHIEVE. SOLIDARITY'S DEMANDS ON SELF-MANAGEMENT AND MEDIA ACCESS, ITS DECISION TO SUPPORT DISSIDENT WORKERS IN OTHER EAST EUROPEAN COUNTRIES AND ITS THREAT TO CALL NEW SEJM ELECTIONS (WHICH WOULD CERTAINLY RESULT IN A CRUSHING DEFEAT FOR PARTY CANDIDATES) ALL THREATEN VITAL POLITICAL INTERESTS OF THE PARTY LEADERSHIP. IT IS NOT CLEAR WHETHER THEY (AND MOSCOW) WILL FEEL IMPELLED TO TAKE IMMEDIATE ACTION TO CONTAIN THESE DEVELOPMENTS, WHICH WOULD BE EXTREMELY DIFFICULT SHORT OF AN ALL-OUT CONFRONTATION WITH THE UNION, OR WILL WAIT FOR THE OUTCOME OF THE SECOND STAGE OF THE SOLIDARITY CONGRESS IN THE HOPE THAT MORE MODERATE ELEMENTS WILL IN THE END PREVAIL.

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