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SOVIET POLICY TOWARD POLAND: FUTURE PROSPECTS

AFTER AUGUST 31 -- THE VIEW FROM MOSCOW

THE SOVIETS VIEWED AUGUST 31 AS A MAJOR TEST FOR THE JARUZELSKI GOVERNMENT AND FOR THEIR OWN POLISH POLICY. WE SUMMARIZE BELOW OUR BEST ASSESSMENT OF WHAT CONCLUSIONS THEY MAY BE DRAWING FROM THE EXPERIENCE OF LAST WEEK, AND HOW THOSE CONCLUSIONS MAY PLAY OUT OVER THE MONTHS AHEAD.

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(Poland)

OBJECTIVES UNCHANGED

SOVIET STRATEGIC INTERESTS AND OBJECTIVES IN POLAND REMAIN BASICALLY UNCHANGED FROM WHAT THEY WERE AT THE BEGINNING OF THE POLISH CRISIS TWO YEARS AGO. THE SECURITY OF THE USSR'S WESTERN BORDER REMAINS THE TOUCHSTONE OF SOVIET POLICY AND MANIFESTS ITSELF IN A RANGE OF SPECIFIC CONCERNS. THE SOVIETS INSIST THAT POLAND REMAIN A FULL AND PARTICIPATING MEMBER OF THE WARSAW PACT, CEMA AND THE SOVIET-LED FOREIGN POLICY BLOC. THEY ALSO WANT POLAND TO REMAIN A "SOCIALIST" COUNTRY ALONG LINES THAT DO NOT DIFFER TOO FUNDAMENTALLY FROM THE SOVIET PARADIGM, THAT IS, THEY WANT TO SEE A COMMUNIST PARTY IN POLAND THAT IS BOTH LOYAL TO MOSCOW AND HAS ESSENTIAL CONTROL OVER ALL MAJOR INSTITUTIONS IN THE SOCIETY: A "LEADING ROLE." AT THE SAME TIME, THEY HAVE AN INTEREST IN A POLAND THAT IS STABLE, ECONOMICALLY VIABLE, AND NOT A SOURCE OF IDEOLOGICAL INFECTION FOR THE REST OF EASTERN EUROPE OR THE USSR ITSELF. ALTHOUGH WE BELIEVE THE SOVIET THRESHOLD OF TOLERANCE IN POLAND REMAINS RELATIVELY HIGH, AS WAS DEMONSTRATED LAST YEAR, THE BOTTOM LINE REMAINS SOVIET MILITARY INTERVENTION IF THE SITUATION SHOULD GET TOO FAR OUT OF HAND.

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BUT PERCEPTIONS AFFECTED

ALTHOUGH THE SOVIETS' INTERESTS AND OBJECTIVES HAVE NOT CHANGED SIGNIFICANTLY, THEIR PERCEPTION OF THE SIZE AND COMPLEXITY OF POLAND'S PROBLEMS HAS DOUBTLESS BEEN AFFECTED BY THE AUGUST 31 EVENTS. DISAPPOINTING ECONOMIC NEWS AND THE LACK OF EVIDENCE THAT THE PZPR IS PULLING ITSELF BACK TOGETHER HAD ALREADY REGISTERED ON THE SOVIET ELITE. THE SIZE AND TENOR OF THE AUGUST 31 DISTURBANCES WILL BE READ IN MOSCOW AS FURTHER EVIDENCE THAT DISCONTENT REMAINS WIDESPREAD AND, PROPAGANDA ASIDE, IS NOT CONFINED TO A SMALL GROUP OF "COUNTER-REVOLUTIONARIES" OR GENERATED FROM WITHOUT.

MOREOVER, DESPITE MASSIVE SECURITY PRECAUTIONS, THE POLISH REGIME WAS UNABLE TO PREVENT DRAMATIC, VIOLENT OUTBREAKS OF POPULAR OPPOSITION. THE SOVIETS MUST EXPECT THAT SUCH OUTBREAKS WILL BE REPEATED IN THE FUTURE WITH SOME REGULARITY, AND REALIZE THAT THIS WILL COMPLICATE ENORMOUSLY THEIR TASK OF PUTTING A "HUMANE" FACE ON JARUZELSKI'S GOVERNMENT NECESSARY TO OVERCOME WESTERN DISTASTE AND ATTRACT THE AID NECESSARY FOR ECONOMIC RECOVERY.

IN SHORT, AUGUST 31 WILL CONFIRM WHAT WE SUSPECT IS A FAIRLY DEEP-SEATED AWARENESS AMONG THE SOVIET LEADERSHIP THAT ATTAINMENT OF ALL THEIR OBJECTIVES IN POLAND WILL BE A LONG, UNPLEASANT BUSINESS, AND THAT TO A SIGNIFICANT DEGREE, PROGRESS IN ONE AREA (E.G., SECURITY) WILL WORK AGAINST MOVEMENT IN OTHERS (E.G., THE ECONOMY).

SECURITY FIRST

BUT TO THE EXTENT MOSCOW SEES CONTRADICTION IN ITS OBJECTIVES TOWARD POLAND, THERE IS LITTLE QUESTION BUT THAT IT WILL RESOLVE THEM IN FAVOR OF GREATER EMPHASIS ON SECURITY. INDEED, THERE WERE ALREADY SIGNS OF THIS OCCURRING WELL BEFORE AUGUST 31. IN THE WEEKS IMMEDIATELY FOLLOWING THE IMPOSITION OF MARTIAL LAW, SOVIET JOURNALISTS WROTE IN UPEEAT TERMS ABOUT THE IMPENDING RECOVERY OF THE POLISH ECONOMY AND ABOUT REBUILDING THE POLISH PARTY. EVEN DISCOUNTING FOR THE PUBLIC RELATIONS ANGLE BEHIND SUCH ARTICLES, THE SOVIETS HAVE STEADILY LOWERED THEIR EXPECTATIONS AS TO WHAT CAN BE REALISTICALLY ACCOMPLISHED UNDER MARTIAL LAW--AND LENGTHENED THEIR VISION OF HOW LONG IT SHOULD LAST. THE AUGUST 31 DISTURBANCES WILL NOURISH THIS TREND TOWARD SEEING TRUE ECONOMIC AND POLITICAL RECOVERY IN POLAND AS A RECEDING GOAL. A SOVIET LECTURER RECENTLY SPOKE OF POLAND STILL BEING A PROBLEM IN 1990. THE AUGUST 31 DISTURBANCES HAVE ALREADY BEEN USED BY THE POLES TO JUSTIFY KEEPING MARTIAL LAW IN PLACE THROUGH THIS YEAR. WE HAVE NO DOUBT THAT THE SOVIETS APPROVE, AND WE SUSPECT THERE IS LITTLE DAYLIGHT BETWEEN JARUZELSKI AND THE SOVIET POLITBURO ON THIS ISSUE.

IMPACT ON SOVIET VIEW OF JARUZELSKI

TO THE EXTENT THEY HAVE BEEN SOFERED BY THE EVENTS OF AUGUST 31, WE SUSPECT THE SOVIETS WILL COME TO APPRECIATE MORE THAN BEFORE WHAT AN ASSET THEY HAVE IN JARUZELSKI. THE AUGUST 31 EVENTS SHOWED HE HAS THE WILL AND THE ABILITY TO CONTROL THE STREETS, AND TO THE EXTENT HE CONTINUES A POLICY OF WEARING DOWN THE RESISSANCE, WITHOUT MAKING MORE THAN COSMETIC CONCESSIONS TO SOLIDARITY

OR THE WEST, THE SOVIETS WILL BE BEHIND HIM EVERY STEP OF THE WAY. WE SUSPECT THAT AT THIS POINT THEY REALIZE THERE IS NO ONE ELSE IN THE POLISH LEADERSHIP WHO IS BOTH ACCEPTABLE TO MOSCOW AND COMMANDS THE ALLEGIANCE OF THE POLISH ARMED FORCES AS WELL AS, IN THEORY AT LEAST, THE POLISH PARTY. AND WE BELIEVE THIS WILL GIVE JARUZELSKI CONSIDERABLE TACTICAL FLEXIBILITY TO DEAL WITH ECONOMIC, SCCIO-POLITICAL AND INTRA-PARTY PROBLEMS HE FACES--ALTHOUGH WE HAVE NO DOUBT THE SOVIETS WILL MAKE CLEAR TO HIM THEIR VIEWS AS TO HOW HE SHOULD PROCEED.

OUTLOOK FOR SOVIET POLICY

IF WE ARE CORRECT IN OUR ASSUMPTION THAT SOVIET APPRECIATION OF THE DIMENSIONS OF THE POLISE PROBLEM IS GROWING, BUT THAT SOVIET APPRECIATION OF JARUZELSKI'S STEWARDSHIP IS ALSO INCREASING, IT SEEMS LIKELY THAT SOVIET POLICY WILL BE ESSENTIALLY STEADY IN THE PERIOD AHEAD. IF JARUZELSKI SEEKS TO RESPOND TO THE LACK OF MOVEMENT SO FAR UNDER MARTIAL LAW AND TO AUGUST 31 BY TAKING SOMEWHAT STRONGER ACTIONS AGAINST LEADING TRADE UNION ACTIVISTS WHO ARE STILL AT LARGE IN AN EFFORT TO BREAK UP THE UNDERGROUND, MOSCOW WOULD BACK HIM TO THE HILT. BUT EVEN AFTER THE RECENT DEMONSTRATIONS, WE WOULD EXPECT IT IS STILL HIS CALL. WE DO SEE SOME LIKELIHOOD THAT THE SOVIETS WILL PRESS JARUZELSKI TO TRY HARDER IN FOUR MAJOR AREAS: A) REESTABLISHING THE PARTY; 2) STRIKING A DEAL WITH THE CHURCH; 3) GETTING THROUGH TO POLISH YOUTH; AND 4) HOLDING BACK ON REESTABLISHING THE TRADE UNIONS. WE DO NOT THINK MOSCOW WILL PRESS ON THE KEY ISSUE OF PARTY VERSUS MILITARY CONTROL. WE CONSIDER EACH OF THESE QUESTIONS IN DETAIL BELOW:

REESTABLISHING THE PARTY

THE SOVIETS PRESUMABLY FAVOR THE RETENTION OF "HEALTHY REMNANTS" IN THE PZPR, IN PARTICULAR, CADRES KNOWN TO THEM AND IDEOLOGICALLY ATTUNED TO THEIR ORTHODOX VIEWS. IN PRACTICE THEY MAY BE WILLING TO ACCEPT A BROADER-BASED POLISH PARTY THAN EXISTED PRIOR TO 1980, BUT THEY WILL STILL HAVE TROUBLE WITH THE NEW DEMOCRATIC PROCEDURES ADOPTED BY THE PZPR'S NINTH CONGRESS. WHEN JARUZELSKI, IN HIS FEBRUARY 24 SPEECH TO THE SEJM, SPOKE OF THE "CORRECTNESS AND USEFULNESS" OF THE "DEMOCRATIC ELECTION MACHINERY" ADOPTED BY THE NINTH CONGRESS, PRAVDA CENSORED THE REMARK.

NONETHELESS, THE SOVIETS VIEW THE RESURRECTION OF THE PARTY AS A CRUCIAL PRECONDITION TO "NORMALIZATION," AND MAY BE WILLING TO ACCEPT SOME COMPROMISES FOR THE TIME BEING IN ORDER TO HAVE A PARTY IN PLACE AND APPEARING TO GOVERN. IN THIS CONNECTION, IT IS SIGNIFICANT THAT THE SOVIETS TOLERATED A REFERENCE TO THE NINTH CONGRESS (AND THUS TO THE PZPR'S "REFORM COURSE") IN THE RECENT BREZHNEV-JARUZELSKI COMMUNIQUE.

THE CHURCH

THE SOVIETS (AND RUSSIANS IN GENERAL) ARE HIGHLY SUSPICIOUS OF THE ROMAN CATHOLIC CHURCH FOR A MIXTURE OF CULTURAL AND HISTORICAL REASONS. SINCE MARTIAL LAW WAS DECLARED, SOVIET PRESS COMMENTARIES ON THE EVENTS IN POLAND HAVE REPEATEDLY INSINUATED THAT THE CHURCH HAS BEEN BEHIND THE DISTURBANCES. THE SOVIETS OPPOSED THE POPE'S PLANS TO VISIT POLAND FOR COMMEMORATION OF 600 YEARS OF THE BLACK MADONNA. THEY WILL CONTINUE TO OPPOSE A VISIT BY THE POPE, ESPECIALLY NOW THAT CZESTOCHOWA HAS BEEN THE SCENE OF VIOLENCE. BUT, AGAIN, AS LONG AS JARUZELSKI SEEMS TO BE MAKING PROGRESS TOWARD MEETING THE BASIC

SOVIET DESIDERATA, WE FEEL THIS WILL ULTIMATELY BE THE POLISH PARTY'S DECISION. THEY WILL PROBABLY URGE JARUZELSKI TO PRESSURE THE CHURCH TO EXERCISE A MODERATING INFLUENCE ON SOLIDARITY.

YOUTH

AUGUST 31 HAS BROUGHT HOME AGAIN TO THE SOVIETS THAT POLISH YOUNG PEOPLE HAVE BEEN IN THE FOREFRONT OF SUPPORT FOR SOLIDARITY AND REFORMS IN POLAND. WITH A YOUTH PROBLEM OF THEIR OWN, AND FEARFUL OF "CONTAGION" IN EAST EUROPE, MOSCOW WILL PRESS THE POLES TO APPLY MAXIMUM RESOURCES TO COPING WITH YOUTH DISAFFECTION.

REESTABLISHING THE TRADE UNIONS

ACCORDING TO SOVIET DOCTRINE AND CURRENT PRACTICE, THE QUESTION OF THE ROLE OF THE TRADE UNIONS WAS SETTLED BY LENIN AT THE TIME OF THE WORKERS' OPPOSITION. WHATEVER COSMETIC ARRANGEMENTS JARUZELSKI MAY BE ABLE TO WORK OUT TO GIVE THE APPEARANCE OF A REBIRTH OF INDEPENDENT TRADE UNIONS, THE SOVIETS WILL NOT ALLOW THE POLISH PARTY TO RELINQUISH ULTIMATE CONTROL OVER THE UNIONS WITHOUT A FIGHT. IN PRACTICAL TERMS, THIS WILL MEAN THEY WILL BE SKEPTICAL AND POSSIBLY OPENLY OPPOSE GOP NEGOTIATIONS WITH LABOR ON THE BASIS OF PROPOSALS ADVANCED BY GROUPS OR INDIVIDUALS WITH PAST ASSOCIATIONS TO SOLIDARITY, AS HAS OCCURRED IN GDANSK. THEY WILL ARGUE INSTEAD THAT THE PARTY MUST FIRST BE FIRMLY REESTABLISHED. INDICATIVELY, WHEN JARUZELSKI RECENTLY SPOKE OF REESTABLISHING THE TRADE UNIONS AS A "SOUND BASIS, INDEPENDENT OF THE ADMINISTRATION," PRAVDA CENSORED THE REMARK.

MILITARY VS. PARTY

ACCORDING TO COMMUNIST THEORY, MILITARY RULE IN A "SOCIALIST" STATE IS AN ANOMALY, BUT MOSCOW HAS NOT SO FAR EXHIBITED MUCH UNEASINESS OVER "BONAPARTISM" IN POLAND (ALTHOUGH JARUZELSKI TOOK THE PRECAUTION OF TRAVELING TO THE CRIMEA IN CIVILIAN CLOTHES). THE OFFICIAL SOVIET LINE IS THAT BONAPARTISM IS STRICTLY A "BOURGEOIS" PHENOMENON THAT OCCURS WHEN A WEAK MIDDLE CLASS TRIES TO PROTECT ITSELF FROM A PROLETARIAN REVOLUTION, AS SOVIET HISTORIANS CLAIM HAPPENED IN FRANCE IN 1799. THE SOVIETS ARE CONCERNED ABOUT CONTINUING MILITARY RULE IN POLAND NOT SO MUCH BECAUSE OF DOCTRINAL RESERVATIONS ABOUT BONAPARTISM AS BECAUSE OF AN INGRAINED BELIEF THAT THE PARTY KNOWS BEST, AND A PRACTICAL FEAR THAT MILITARY RULERS CANNOT DEAL EFFECTIVELY WITH COMPLEX ECONOMIC, SOCIAL AND POLITICAL PROBLEMS. SHOULD JARUZELSKI MOVE FURTHER IN THE DIRECTION OF "MILITARIZING" POLISH SOCIETY, ALONG THE LINES OF HIS RECENT MILITARY INSPECTION TEAMS, THE SOVIETS WOULD NONETHELESS MOST LIKELY STIFLE THESE CONCERNS, UNDERSTANDING THAT THE PARTY IS INCAPABLE OF DOING THE JOB BETTER.