

NATO SITUATION CENTRE
CENTRE DE SITUATION OTAN

COMCENTRE NAQ/MC

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NATO CONFIDENTIAL

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(Poland)

N A T O C O N F I D E N T I A L
JICTEL 771 DATED 22 AUG 80
NADA/ASSESSMENT/AUG 002/JIC/221100Z
THE FOLLOWING IS AN ASSESSMENT BY JIC

POLAND.

1. IN THE PAST WEEK, THE LABOUR UNREST IN POLAND SPARKED OFF BY THE INCREASES IN MEAT PRICES AT THE BEGINNING OF JULY, HAS ESCALATED RAPIDLY. THE MAIN CENTRE OF DISRUPTION IS NOW THE PORT OF GDANSK, WHERE A CONFRONTATION HAS DEVELOPED BETWEEN THE CENTRAL AUTHORITIES AND AN INTER-FACTORY STRIKE COMMITTEE. THE STRIKE WAVE HAS ALSO SPREAD TO OTHER CITIES ON THE BALTIC COAST.

2. FOLLOWING A LULL IN THE LEVEL OF STRIKES TOWARDS THE END OF JULY AND AUGUST THE SITUATION DETERIORATED AGAIN

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WITH STRIKES SPREADING TO WARSAW AND TO LODZ AND GDANSK WHICH WERE AT THE CENTRE OF THE SERIOUS UNREST IN DECEMBER 1970. THE STRIKES IN WARSAW AND LODZ APPEAR TO HAVE BEEN PART OF A SPONTANEOUS CHAIN REACTION TO ECONOMIC GRIEVANCES. THERE IS NO EVIDENCE THAT IN THOSE CITIES THE DISSIDENT WORKERS DEFENCE COMMITTEE (KOR) PLAYED ANY ROLE IN ORGANISING THE STRIKES BEYOND THE DISSEMINATION OF INFORMATION, OR THAT THERE WAS ANY CO-ORDINATION OF STRIKE ACTIVITY. THE SITUATION IN GDANSK HAS EVOLVED DIFFERENTLY, WITH KOR ACTIVISTS PROBABLY PLAYING A SIGNIFICANT ROLE IN OFFERING ADVICE AND SUPPORT TO THE STRIKERS. THE STRIKES QUICKLY SPREAD TO A NUMBER OF OTHER ENTERPRISES IN THE GDANSK AREA AND ON 16 AUGUST AN INTER-FACTORY STRIKE COMMITTEE WAS ESTABLISHED. ON 17 AUGUST THIS COMMITTEE SUBMITTED TO THE AUTHORITIES A LIST OF DEMANDS OF BOTH AN ECONOMIC AND POLITICAL NATURE: THIS LIST HAS SINCE BEEN EXTENDED. ECONOMIC DEMANDS INCLUDE HIGHER WAGES, MEAT RATIONING AND FAMILY ALLOWANCES EQUIVALENT TO THOSE RECEIVED BY THE POLICE AND MILITIA. POLITICAL DEMANDS INCLUDE THE

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PAGE 3 RFWI 2052 N A T O C O N F I D E N T I A L
 ABOLITION OF FACTORY COUNCILS AND OFFICIAL TRADE UNIONS
 AND THEIR REPLACEMENT BY FREE TRADE UNIONS: ABOLITION
 OF CENSORSHIP: RELEASE OF CERTAIN POLITICAL PRISONERS:
 CHANGES IN THE ELECTORAL LAW GOVERNING CANDIDATES FOR
 THE SEJM AND PEOPLES COUNCILS: THE ERECTION OF A MONUMENT
 TO COMMEMORATE THE WORKERS KILLED DURING THE DECEMBER 1970
 RIOTS AND IMMUNITY FOR STRIKE LEADERS.

3. GIEREK'S TELEVISION SPEECH ON 18 AUGUST DREW A CLEAR
 DISTINCTION BETWEEN THE ECONOMIC AND POLITICAL
 DEMANDS. HE PROMISED SOME ACTION ON THE FORMER
 BUT REPEATED EARLIER STATEMENTS THAT THERE WERE NO EASY
 SOLUTIONS TO THE COUNTRY'S ECONOMIC PROBLEMS. APART FROM
 THE PROMISE OF SOME INTERNAL REFORM OF THE OFFICIAL
 TRADE UNION ORGANISATION AND AN INCREASED ADVISORY ROLE
 FOR THE COMMITTEES OF WORKERS SELF-MANAGEMENT, HE RULED OUT THE
 POSSIBILITY OF ANY OF THE STRIKERS' POLITICAL DEMANDS
 BEING MET AND SAID THAT THE WORKERS WERE BEING
 EXPLOITED BY ANTI-SOCIALIST ELEMENTS IN SOCIETY. IN
 CALLING ON THE STRIKERS TO RETURN TO WORK HE MADE THE
 MOST FORTHRIGHT STATEMENT SO FAR ABOUT THE DANGERS OF

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 SOVIET INTERVENTION: ONLY A SOCIALIST POLAND CAN BE A
 FREE AND INDEPENDENT COUNTRY WITH INVIOABLE BORDERS.....
 THERE ARE LIMITS NO ONE IS ALLOWED TO EXCEED.

4. EVEN ON THE ECONOMIC FRONT THE LEADERSHIP'S ROOM FOR
 MANOEUVRE IS LIMITED. THE WAGE INCREASES ALREADY
 CONCEDED TOGETHER WITH PRODUCTION LOSSES AS A RESULT OF
 THE STRIKES WILL ADD TO INFLATIONARY PRESSURES AND
 GENERAL ECONOMIC PROBLEMS. THE DETERIORATING PROSPECTS
 FOR THIS YEAR'S HARVEST FOLLOWING THE RECENT FLOODS MEAN
 THAT THE FOOD SUPPLY SITUATION CAN HARDLY IMPROVE. ANY
 ATTEMPT TO BOOST DOMESTIC SUPPLIES BY CUTTING BACK ON
 EXPORTS OR BOOSTING IMPORTS WILL HIT PLANS FOR ERADICATING
 THE CONVERTIBLE CURRENCY TRADE DEFICIT AND WILL MAKE
 POLAND'S EXTERNAL FINANCING PROBLEMS ALL THE MORE SERIOUS.
 EVEN IN THE SHORT TERM THE STRIKES IN GDANSK WILL HAVE
 A DISRUPTIVE EFFECT ON POLAND'S FOREIGN TRADE, ON THE SUPPLY
 OF IMPORTED CONSUMER GOODS TO THE MARKET, AND ON THE
 AVAILABILITY OF FOODSTUFFS IN THE STRIKE AREA.

5. BOTH SIDES IN THE DISPUTES HAVE SO FAR ACTED
 CAUTIOUSLY AND MADE EVERY EFFORT TO AVOID VIOLENCE. THE

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 STRIKERS HAVE CONFINED THEIR ACTIVITIES TO THEIR WORK
 PLACES AND AVOIDED CLASHES WITH THE POLICE. THE
 AUTHORITIES HAVE TAKEN A CONCILIATORY LINE ON ECONOMIC
 DEMANDS, BUT ARE NOW FACED WITH POLITICAL DEMANDS WHICH
 CANNOT BE CONCEDED WITHOUT UNDERMINING THEIR OWN AUTHORITY.
 THEIR CURRENT TACTIC IS TO TRY TO BREAK DOWN THE
 SOLIDARITY OF THE STRIKERS: THE COMMISSION SET UP TO
 EXAMINE STRIKERS' GRIEVANCES HAS REFUSED TO NEGOTIATE
 WITH THE INTER-FACTORY COMMITTEE IN GDANSK, AND IS
 TRYING TO TALK TO STRIKE COMMITTEES IN INDIVIDUAL
 ENTERPRISES. THE REGIME IS ALSO INCREASING ITS PSYCHOLOGICAL
 PRESSURE ON THE STRIKERS. THE ARREST OF 18 DISSIDENT
 LEADERS WILL INCREASE THE ISOLATION OF THE STRIKERS AND
 REDUCE THE FLOW OF INFORMATION BOTH TO THE FOREIGN MEDIA
 AND TO OTHER STRIKERS. ALTHOUGH THE AUTHORITIES WILL AVOID
 THE USE OF FORCE FOR AS LONG AS POSSIBLE THERE ARE SOME
 REPORTS THAT POLICE AND RIOT POLICE REINFORCEMENTS ARE
 BEING BROUGHT INTO THE GDANSK AREA. THE RUSSIANS HAVE
 EVIDENTLY DECIDED FOR THE TIME BEING TO ADOPT A LOW
 PROFILE OVER THE POLISH TROUBLES AND LEAVE GIEREK TO TRY

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TO FIND A SOLUTION, THOUGH THE REIMPOSITION OF JAMMING
IN THE SOVIET UNION SHOWS HOW CONCERNED THEY ARE ABOUT
THE POSSIBLE EFFECTS OF EVENTS IN POLAND ON THEIR OWN
POPULATION. THE RUSSIANS WOULD NO DOUBT PLAY A MORE
ACTIVE ROLE IF THE SITUATION DETERIORATED MUCH FURTHER,
BUT WE BELIEVE THEY WOULD ONLY INTERVENE WITH FORCE IF THE
POLISH REGIME SEEMED LIKELY EITHER TO LOSE CONTROL OVER
THE COUNTRY OR TO INTRODUCE MAJOR POLICY CHANGES
UNACCEPTABLE TO THE SOVIET UNION. THERE IS AT PRESENT
NO EVIDENCE OF UNUSUAL TROOP MOVEMENTS BY SOVIET FORCES
IN POLAND OR THE ADJACENT SOVIET MILITARY DISTRICTS
(THOUGH THE LARGEST WARSAW PACT EXERCISE FOR 10 YEARS
IS EXPECTED TO TAKE PLACE IN EAST GERMANY IN EARLY
SEPTEMBER).

6. THE SITUATION IN GDANSK HAS NOW REACHED A STALEMATE.
IT IS NOT CLEAR HOW LONG THE STRIKERS WILL BE ABLE TO
MAINTAIN THEIR UNITY, BUT THE LONGER THE STALEMATE
CONTINUES THE GREATER THE PRESSURE WILL BE ON THE
LEADERSHIP TO ADOPT TOUGHER MEASURES. THE GOVERNMENT
MUST STILL HOPE THAT A NEGOTIATED SETTLEMENT WILL BE

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REACHED, POSSIBLY WITH SOME LIMITED AND LARGELY COSMETIC
CONCESSIONS ON THE CRUCIAL ISSUE OF TRADE UNIONS. BUT
EVEN IF A PEACEFUL SETTLEMENT IS REACHED IN GDANSK, AND
THE STRIKE WAVE DOES NOT SPREAD BEYOND THE BALTIC COAST
AREA, THE HARSH ECONOMIC CLIMATE LIKELY TO PREVAIL IN
POLAND OVER THE NEXT FEW YEARS MAKES A RECURRENCE OF
INDUSTRIAL UNREST ALMOST INEVITABLE.

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