

NATO SITUATION CENTRE  
CENTRE DE SITUATION OTAN

COMCENTRE NAC/MC

Number: 133

Date : 16 JUL 81

NATO CONFIDENTIAL

PRIORITY

COPY  
EXEMPLAIRE. N°

115

AS (81) 066

P. A. Sub - Registry

File N° 19-10-01

*(Poland)*

P 161252Z JUL 81

FM LONDON

TO AIG 6006

AIG 6007

BT

NADA/ASSESSMENT/JULY 004/JIC/161252Z

THE FOLLOWING IS AN ASSESSMENT BY JIC

POLAND

1. THE MAIN REPORT TO THE PARTY CONGRESS WHICH BEGAN ON 14 JULY CONTINUED THE CENTRIST LINE OF RECENT POLICY. THE LEADERSHIP FAILED TO SECURE AGREEMENT TO TWO PROCEDURAL PROPOSALS, CONCERNING THE ELECTION OF THE NEW FIRST SECRETARY AND THE REPORT OF THE GRABSKI COMMISSION, WHICH WOULD HAVE HELPED TO PROMOTE A SMOOTH AND SPEEDY CONDUCT OF PROCEEDINGS.

2. PRELIMINARY REPORTS INDICATE THAT KANIA'S KEY-NOTE SPEECH PRESENTED FEW NEW FEATURES. IT REITERATED THE PARTY'S ENDORSEMENT OF "RENEWAL", BUT EVERY SPECIFIC COMMITMENT TO REFORM WAS ACCOMPANIED BY QUALIFICATIONS LIMITING THE EXTENT OF PERMISSIBLE CHANGE. THIS REFLECTS THE NEED TO DRAW A LINE BETWEEN POPULAR DEMANDS FOR REFORM AND THE LIMITS OF PROBABLE SOVIET TOLERANCE. THE RESULT IS LIKELY TO PLEASE NEITHER REFORMISTS NOR CONSERVATIVES, AND THERE HAVE BEEN HARD-HITTING SPEECHES FROM BOTH SIDES IN THE SUBSEQUENT DEBATE. KANIA COMMENTED THAT THE ECONOMIC SITUATION WAS SUCH AS TO JUSTIFY THE DECLARATION OF A STATE OF EMERGENCY. THIS WILL HAVE BEEN PARTLY AN ATTEMPT TO BRING HOME TO HIS AUDIENCE THE GRAVITY OF THE SITUATION. BUT IT MAY ALSO INDICATE THAT THE AUTHORITIES ARE, AS IN MARCH/APRIL, CONSIDERING SUCH A STEP IF THE ECONOMIC - OR POLITICAL - SITUATION GETS OUT OF HAND.

3. THE SPEECH BY THE HEAD OF THE SOVIET DELEGATION TO THE CONGRESS GRISHIN, WAS MORE POSITIVE THAN ANY RECENT PRONOUNCEMENT ON POLAND. HE REPEATED EARLIER WARNINGS THAT VARIOUS DANGEROUS TRENDS PERSISTED IN THE COUNTRY, AND REITERATED THAT THE DEFENCE OF SOCIALISM IN POLAND WAS OF CONCERN TO ITS ALLIES. BUT HE ALSO STATED THAT THE SOVIET UNION CONSIDERED IT WAS FOR POLISH COMMUNISTS TO BRING THE COUNTRY OUT OF THE CRISIS AND BELIEVED THAT THE PARTY WOULD BE ABLE TO DO THIS. THE CHOICE OF GRISHIN, A MIDDLE-RANKING POLITBURO MEMBER, RATHER THAN A SENIOR PARTY SECRETARY TO HEAD THE DELEGATION SUGGESTS A SOVIET WILLINGNESS FOR THE MOMENT TO ACKNOWLEDGE THE CONGRESS AS A RESPECTABLE EVENT. THE REPORTING OF THE CONGRESS HAS SO FAR BEEN BRIEF AND FORMAL.

Document NOT to be removed  
from file.

This document consists  
of two pages

- 1 -

N A T O C O N F I D E N T I A L

AS (81) 066

4. THE POLISH LEADERSHIP AS PLAN TO HOLD THE ELECTION FOR THE PARTY FIRST SECRETARY ON THE FIRST DAY OF THE CONGRESS, THUS ENSURING HIM GREATER AUTHORITY TO SHAPE THE SUBSEQUENT PROCEEDINGS, FAILED WHEN DELEGATES VOTED BY A NARROW MARGIN TO DELAY THE ELECTION UNTIL AFTER THAT OF THE CENTRAL COMMITTEE. IN TAKING THIS DECISION DELEGATES MAY HAVE BEEN MOTIVATED LARGELY BY A DETERMINATION NOT TO BE MANIPULATED. THE FIRST SECRETARY WILL BE ELECTED DIRECTLY BY THE WHOLE BODY OF DELEGATES. THERE ARE TO BE AT LEAST TWO OTHER CANDIDATES FOR THE POST AS WELL AS KANIA. SEVEN NOMINATIONS HAVE SO FAR BEEN RECEIVED INCLUDING REPRESENTATIVES FROM BOTH WINGS OF THE PARTY. KANIA STILL SEEMS MOST LIKELY TO BE ELECTED, BUT EVENTS DURING THE CONGRESS COULD WEAKEN HIS POSITION. FOR INSTANCE, A LETTER FROM GOMULKA, NOT SO FAR AUTHENTICATED, IS CIRCULATING AMONG DELEGATES; THIS IMPLICATES KANIA IN THE DECISION TO USE FORCE AGAINST STRIKERS IN 1970.

5. THE DELEGATES ALSO DECIDED TO HEAR AND DEBATE A REPORT ON THE WORK OF THE GRABSKI COMMISSION WHICH HAS BEEN INVESTIGATING THE MISTAKES AND ABUSES OF THE FORMER LEADERSHIP. THE CURRENT LEADERSHIP HAD BEEN HOPING TO AVOID TOO MUCH DEBATE ON THIS ISSUE, BOTH TO FOCUS ATTENTION ON PRESENT AND FUTURE PROBLEMS AND BECAUSE THEY WERE THEMSELVES HEAVILY INVOLVED WITH THE PREVIOUS LEADERSHIP AND THEIR POLICIES. THE CONGRESS DECIDED TO EXPEL GIEREK AND A NUMBER OF HIS ASSOCIATES FROM THE PARTY.

6. THE OUTCOME OF THE CONGRESS REMAINS DIFFICULT TO FORESEE. THE DELEGATES ARE CLEARLY IN A MOOD TO HAVE THEIR SAY AND MAKE THEIR OWN DECISIONS. THE DEBATES ARE HEATED AND THE BACK-STAGE POLITICAL ACTIVITY INTENSE. ALTHOUGH DEEPLY DISTURBING TO ORTHODOX COMMUNISTS THIS PROCESS MAY HELP TO CONVINCE THE POLISH PEOPLE THAT THE CONGRESS IS TAKING PLACE IN A DEMOCRATIC MANNER AND IS NOT BEING STAGE-MANAGED BY PARTY BUREAUCRATS. THE LEADERSHIP MUST HOPE THAT IN THE END THE RADICALS ON EITHER WING WILL CANCEL EACH OTHER OUT AND THE CONGRESS WILL FINALLY OPT FOR THE CENTRIST LINE SET OUT IN THE MAIN REPORT.

BT