

NATO SITUATION CENTRE  
CENTRE DE SITUATION OTAN

COMCENTRE NAQ/MC

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JICTEL 702 NADA/ASSESSMENT/AUGUST 007/JIC/061740Z

THE FOLLOWING IS AN ASSESSMENT BY JIC

POLAND

1. HUNGER MARCHES AND STRIKE CALLS HAVE PROLIFERATED IN PROTEST AGAINST FOOD SHORTAGES AND A CUT IN THE MEAT RATION. SOME GOVERNMENT CHANGES AND A NEW CENSORSHIP LAW HAVE BEEN APPROVED. TALKS BETWEEN SOLIDARITY AND THE GOVERNMENT HAVE TAKEN PLACE AND A PLENUM IS TO BE HELD ON 8 AUGUST. THE LATEST DEMONSTRATION IN WARSAW HAS BROUGHT SOLIDARITY AND THE GOVERNMENT INTO CONFRONTATION AGAIN.
2. GOVERNMENT PROPOSALS TO INCREASE SHARPLY RETAIL PRICES INCLUDING THOSE OF BASIC FOODSTUFFS, AND A DECISION TO CUT MEAT RATIONS BY AN AVERAGE OF 20 PERCENT HAVE SPARKED OFF A WAVE OF PUBLIC PROTEST THROUGHOUT POLAND. HUNGER MARCHES AND STRIKES HAVE BEEN ORGANISED AT LOCAL LEVEL, AND REGIONAL SOLIDARITY GROUPS HAVE CALLED FOR INCREASED READINESS TO STRIKE AND FOR WARNING STRIKES THIS WEEK. THE POLISH LEADERSHIP HAVE CLAIMED THAT THERE IS NO THREAT OF HUNGER IN THE COUNTRY AND HAVE WARNED OF THE DANGER OF A NATIONWIDE CONFLICT, ACCUSING ELEMENTS OF SOLIDARITY OF EXPLOITING THE SITUATION FOR POLITICAL PURPOSES. A PROTEST PROCESSION OF MOTOR VEHICLES BLOCKED THE CENTRE OF WARSAW ON MONDAY AFTER POLICE ATTEMPTED TO DIVERT DRIVERS AWAY FROM A ROUTE PASSING THE PARTY HEADQUARTERS. A TWO HOUR GENERAL STRIKE TOOK PLACE IN WARSAW ON WEDNESDAY, FOLLOWED BY A LIFTING OF THE BLOCKADE IN THE CENTRE OF THE CITY.
3. THE SOLIDARITY LEADERSHIP HAS ACQUIESCED IN THE CUT IN MEAT RATIONS FOR AUGUST, ACCEPTING THAT AVAILABLE SUPPLIES ARE NOT SUFFICIENT TO MEET THE NOMINAL RATION. THE SEPTEMBER RATION IS TO BE REVIEWED AND WILL BE THE SUBJECT OF FURTHER DISCUSSIONS: SOLIDARITY MAINTAINS THAT THE FURTHER MEASURES PROPOSED WILL REQUIRE PUBLIC DISCUSSION AND COMPENSATION FOR THE LOWER PAID: IMPLEMENTATION OF WIDER ECONOMIC REFORM MEASURES SUCH AS PRICE RISES CAN ONLY BE AGREED AS PART OF A PACKAGE WHICH WOULD INCLUDE A DEGREE OF WORKERS SELF MANAGEMENT. THIS COULD PROVE TO BE A STUMBLING BLOCK IN FUTURE NEGOTIATIONS. SO FAR THE GOVERNMENT HAS INDICATED THAT THE SOLIDARITY PROPOSAL FOR WORKERS TO APPOINT THE GENERAL MANAGER OF ENTERPRISES IS ONE WHICH CAN BE DISCUSSED AT LEAST IN THE CASE OF CERTAIN CATEGORIES OF ENTERPRISES.

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SOLIDARITY ITSELF HAS SET UP A SIX MAN DECISION GROUP TO RUN THE UNION BETWEEN THE MEETINGS OF ITS NATIONAL CO-ORDINATING COMMISSION. THE GROUP HELD TALKS WITH THE GOVERNMENT ON MONDAY ABOUT FOOD SUPPLIES AND ECONOMIC REFORMS. THESE WERE ADJOURNED WITH NO AGREEMENT ANNOUNCED AND WILL BE RESUMED ON THURSDAY. THE UNION HAS SAID THAT THE GOVERNMENT HAS COME UP WITH NO CONCRETE IDEAS OR RESPONSE TO SOLIDARITY PROPOSALS. THE GOVERNMENT ON TUESDAY ANNOUNCED THAT IT WAS SETTING UP A JOINT CIVILIAN-MILITARY CRISIS STAFF WITH POWERS TO DEAL WITH THE SUPPLY SITUATION AND TO ENSURE THE FUNCTIONING OF THE DEFENCE INFRA STRUCTURE.

4. THE GOVERNMENT CONSIDERED THE DRAFT CHANGES TO THE PLANNED BUDGET FOR 1981 AT A MEETING OF THE SEJM ON 30 JULY, AND THE ECONOMIC STABILISATION PLAN WAS UNANIMOUSLY APPROVED.

THE CHAIRMAN OF THE PRICES COMMISSION, KRASINSKI SAID THAT PRICE RISES WOULD HAVE TO BE INTRODUCED CAUTIOUSLY; THEY SHOULD BE LINKED WITH BUT COULD PRECEDE GENERAL ECONOMIC REFORM. THE AGRICULTURE MINISTER SAID THAT ALTHOUGH PROSPECTS FOR THE HARVEST RECENTLY SEEMED GOOD, FORECASTS WERE NO LESS OPTIMISTIC BECAUSE OF HEAVY RAINFALL. SHORTAGES OF FUEL AND EQUIPMENT WILL ALSO HAMPER HARVESTING. AT THE SEJM SESSION A NUMBER OF GOVERNMENTAL CHANGES WERE APPROVED. MINISTERS DROPPED INCLUDE VICE PREMIER JAGIELSKI, WHO WAS RESPONSIBLE FOR ECONOMIC STRATEGY. HE HAS BEEN REPLACED BY OBODOWSKI WHO IS TO HEAD THE CRISIS STAFF. THE MOST STRIKING FEATURE OF THE CHANGES WAS THE APPOINTMENT OF TWO MILITARY OFFICERS, GENERAL KISZCZAK AS MINISTER OF THE INTERIOR AND GENERAL HUPALOWSKI AS MINISTER FOR LOCAL GOVERNMENT. THIS MAY REFLECT JARUZELSKI'S DETERMINATION TO HAVE MEN HE KNOWS AND CAN TRUST IN KEY JOBS.

5. THE SEJM ALSO APPROVED THE NEW CENSORSHIP LAW WHICH WILL COME INTO EFFECT IN OCTOBER AND WILL AMONGST AOTHER THINGS EXEMPT SOLIDARITY PUBLICATIONS FROM PRIOR CENSORSHIP. THE NEW LAW MEANS THAT THE CENSORS OFFICE WILL BE SUPERVISED BY PARLIAMENT RATHER THAN THE PRIME MINISTER'S OFFICE AND THERE IS PROVISION FOR APPEALS AGAINST THE CENSORS.

6. MILITARY COMMANDERS WHO MET AT THE WEEKEND HAVE SAID THE ARMY WILL BE USED TO CRACK DOWN ON SPECULATORS: ON MONDAY SOLDIERS WERE REPORTED TO HAVE BEEN USED TO CLOSE DOWN THE WARSAW OPEN AIR (FREE) MARKET. IN SPITE OF THIS, WE DO NOT BELIEVE THE ARMY WILL BE CALLED UPON TO ACT DIRECTLY AGAINST WORKERS OR STRIKERS ALTHOUGH THE POSSIBILITY OF THEIR USE AS A LAST RESORT CANNOT BE RULED OUT. THE POLISH ARMY IS NOT TRAINED OR EQUIPPED FOR INTERNAL SECURITY OPERATIONS AND HAS NOT BEEN USED IN THIS ROLE IN THE PAST: THE RELIABILITY OF POLISH CONSCRIPTS IN SUCH A ROLE MUST BE IN DOUBT. WE CONTINUE TO BELIEVE THAT THE MILITIA WOULD BE USED TO DEAL WITH DISTURBANCES IN THE FIRST INSTANCE. THE ARMY MIGHT BE USED TO CARRY OUT A RANGE OF TASKS IN SUPPORT OF THE GOVERNMENT SUCH AS SECURITY OF GOVERNMENT FACILITIES, JOINT SECURITY PATROLS WITH LOCAL POLICE, MAINTENANCE OF COMMUNICATIONS, TRANSPORT AND OTHER ESSENTIAL PUBLIC SERVICES. THERE ARE ALSO PLANS TO USE CONSCRIPTS TO ASSIST THE CIVILIAN ECONOMY, FOR EXAMPLE, IN THE MINES.

7. THE SOVIET UNION HAS SIGNALLED ITS CONCERN AT DEVELOPMENTS IN POLAND. AND THIS HAS BEEN ECHOED IN THE EAST GERMAN AND CZECHOSLOVAK PRESS. TASS, QUOTING A WARSAW NEWSPAPER SAID THAT POLAND WAS THREATENED BY ANARCHY AND CHAOS AND THAT SOLIDARITY ELEMENTS WERE EXPLOITING THE SITUATION. THE SOVIET LEADERS MUST BE ALARMED BY THE SCALE OF STREET PROTEST.

8. THE SITUATION IN POLAND HAS DETERIORATED SHARPLY IN THE LAST TWO WEEKS AS THE SUPPLY OF GOODS HAS WORSENERED AND THE POLISH PEOPLE HAVE BEGUN TO RUN OUT OF PATIENCE. THE POLISH LEADERSHIP RECOGNISES THE SERIOUSNESS OF THE SITUATION, BUT THERE IS NO WAY THAT THE FOOD SHORTAGES CAN BE REMEDIED IMMEDIATELY. MEANWHILE THE DEMONSTRATION IN WARSAW MARKS ANOTHER CONFRONTATION BETWEEN SOLIDARITY AND THE GOVERNMENT, ALTHOUGH THE IMMEDIATE THREAT OF VIOLENCE HAS BEEN REMOVED. THE APPOINTMENT OF MILITARY MEN TO KEY GOVERNMENT POSTS DEALING WITH INTERNAL SECURITY AND THE CREATION OF A CRISIS STAFF ARE MOVES WHICH MAY BE A PRELUDE TO THE GOVERNMENT TAKING FURTHER EMERGENCY POWERS

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