

October 8, 1981

**Record of a Meeting between Representatives of the
CPCz CC and SED CC International Relations
Department in East Germany (excerpt)**

Citation:

"Record of a Meeting between Representatives of the CPCz CC and SED CC International Relations Department in East Germany (excerpt)", October 8, 1981, Wilson Center Digital Archive, SÚA, A ÚV KSC, file Gustáv Husák, unsorted documents; translated by Oldrich Tuma. <https://wilson-center-digital-archive.dvincitest.com/document/112005>

Original Language:

Czech

Contents:

Translation - English

8 October 1981.

[...]

The Situation Inside the Party

The [PUWP] Party Congress has solved nothing. The change which took place at the highest party levels has led nowhere. Logically, it could not lead anywhere under the present conceptual conditions of maintaining dialogue with a class enemy. Following the end of the Solidarity

Congress, however, a change in thinking has occurred, particularly amongst the party rank and file. Opinion groups are forming, representing different conceptualizations of the optimal solution in the Polish situation.

1. Particularly at the district level there is a group of honest comrades who had suffered illusions regarding the possibility of dialogue with Solidarity. Everyday reality, however, has shown them something quite different. The leaders of certain districts, with the exception of Poznan, Gdansk, and Cracow, have come to the conclusion that Kania's capitulationist policy has collapsed.

2. A crystallization of opinion is also taking place at the level of the CC. Recently even Kania and [Politburo member Kazimierz] Barczikowski have undergone a slight shift in position, particularly under pressure from their district comrades and from the Soviet leadership.

3. Definite changes in the positions of certain individuals can also be seen. Rakowski for example is turning from the right wing towards the center and is gradually acquiring a leftist flair. On the other hand, [hardline Politburo member Stefan] Olszowski is moving to the right. One can also note differences of opinion between Kania and Jaruzelski. This results from the fact that Rakowski is essentially the brains behind Jaruzelski and thus a change in Rakowski's position influences Jaruzelski's point of view, which then leads to his differences in opinion with Kania.

4. The CC apparatus is very strongly opposed to Kania. This emerges from conversations with PUWP CC members during both private and official visits to the GDR. The common thread of these changes in opinion is the realization that the tactic of dialogue, which permits the steady advance of the counterrevolution, is at an end. It is not known, though, how deep or expansive these differentiating changes are. Our Polish comrades themselves say that confrontation is unavoidable, as Kania's leadership, bereft of ideas, has failed to take steps to mobilize the Party and is hostage to its own illusions regarding the last Party Congress. Kania and Barczikowski apparently fear more than anything else a general strike, a civil war, and the occupation of Polish territory by the Soviet Union. These are apparently the main reasons why they have chosen a tactic of dialogue. The district party committees are showing an increase in their own initiatives. Comrades are organizing their own actions against Solidarity with the goal of preventing illegality, maintaining the industrial process, organizing the supply of goods, and maintaining order at least at the district level. Yet this approach cannot be credited to all districts. It is dependent on two factors:

1. the personality of the district party secretary
2. the politico-ideological level of the membership base

For example, in Wroclaw the First Secretary is good, but the membership base is bad. In Leszno, Jelenia Gora, and Zelenia Gora the membership base is average, but the

leading secretaries are not worth much.

Discussion circles in Katowice, Poznan and other cities are increasing and are changing into Marxist-Leninist circles. These are increasing their influence. However, they have large conceptual problems (often leftist deviations), as well as organizational difficulties and poor material conditions. From all of this the question emerges-where to next? By all accounts the counterrevolution has its own objective laws. Under certain conditions it escapes from the hands of its organizers and takes on an uncontrollable character. The factors which have so far acted as a brake on the Polish counterrevolution (the influence of socialist society, moderate tendencies in the West, the Polish Church) will not continue to operate forever. The question emerges as to when this will all cease to function. American imperialism plays itself out in Polish events in two directions:

a) rapidly escalating the situation in Poland, and in an attempt at system change creating a bonfire of international provocation,

b) continuing the furtive process, institutionalizing and legalizing the achieved gains of the counterrevolution.

The Polish Church has been a supporter of the latter course, and under [Cardinal Stefan] Wyszynski restrained the most radical wing of Solidarity, as the Church does not wish to lose what influence they have managed to gain within the country. The departure of Wyszynski has thus meant a weakening of the Church's restraining role.

Increasing anarchy is proof that the counter-revolution's furtive phase is coming to an end. Destruction and the uncontrollable course of certain mass actions could change into an open stand-off. The spark could be provided by the emerging chaos in the supply of goods. The onset of winter will most likely speed up the mechanics of confrontation. This is not, however, in the interest of any of the parties. The question thus emerges of how to avoid the coming conflict. In Poland a variety of solutions, at different levels, have been proposed:

I. Calling a meeting of the Warsaw Pact Political Consultative Committee, at which Kania and the Polish delegation would be forced to sign a list of demands. Kania would, upon his return, have to carry out radical measures, for example declaring a state of emergency, during which it would be necessary to count on the occurrence of a general strike including armed confrontation. Both these clashes would definitely reduce the blood which would have to be spilled later in a larger confrontation. This point of view is prevalent in the Warsaw region.

II. Another prospect assumes intensively working on those Congress delegates who have a permanent mandate, gaining a majority, calling a new Congress, and electing a new leadership which would be capable of radical measures in both the Party and the state (purge the Party, make the state apparatus capable of action, declare a state of emergency, create an armed militia and partially arm party members). This is a perspective which is widely adhered to in the GDR border regions. [Tadeusz] Grabski is apparently also thinking along these lines.

III. A different opinion relies on the Soviet Union, the "SSR and the GDR withholding military intervention against and hermetically sealing Poland inside its borders until the Poles solve their problems on their own. This would, however, mean an end to wholesome forces in the country.

IV. In the case of increasing anarchy we can presume that Kania and Jaruzelski, with the consent of Solidarity, will declare a state of emergency and put the army on alert, not, however, with the purpose of solving internal problems but in order to prevent the intervention of the Soviet Union and other countries. (This is the model of Polish

history, of which Pilsudski once remarked, that "he got on the red tram and got off the white one.")

The opinion of the SED regarding these opinions is that it is worth discussing the first and second of them. The SED is working in 15 districts where it has cooperative contacts. It is sending the maximum possible number of delegates and also welcoming as many Polish party delegates as possible. It is trying to strengthen the confidence of healthy forces, but will send material support only where it can be sure that it will be properly utilized. The healthy forces need copying technology, communication technology, and propaganda and agitation materials. The GDR will send this by various channels and in varying quantities. It will send them perhaps to district committees, for example to Comrade [Tadeusz] Porembski¹ in Wroclaw, to Marxist circles in Poznan, and so on. The SED is working with the Polish state apparatus and especially with its headquarters through old and new contacts. (The Minister of Education is, for example, an accessible and reasonable comrade.) The SED leadership adopted last week a resolution by which all members of the Politburo, Secretariat, and leading divisions of the CC should seek out contacts with their Polish partners and as far as possible influence them in a Marxist-Leninist sense. Comrade [Konrad] Naumann, who is a member of the SED CC Politburo and First Secretary of the Berlin Municipal Party Committee, has begun a visit to Poland. A similar approach has been taken by the leadership of the GDR Army, Security Services and militia. These, however, are organizing themselves along their own lines. The SED has contacts with all the deputy ministers in the PPR Department of National Defense. Jaruzelski himself is avoiding all contact with the GDR. Contacts with the security apparatus are good and take place at various levels.

Recently, our Polish comrades have requested that the GDR accept those comrades from the PUWP party apparatus who are unemployed. The GDR is prepared to do so and is just waiting for a list of these people.

The SED CC, following the lead of the "SSR, will begin radio broadcasts to Poland on October 12. There are, however, personnel, language, and other difficulties with this.

Contacts with our Polish comrades show that great attention is paid to the Czechoslovak broadcasts. The broadcasts are interesting and evaluated positively. This has encouraged the SED CC to begin a similar type of broadcast, though from a historical perspective this is more difficult for the GDR than for the "SSR.

The evaluation of certain comrades, with whom it is necessary to cooperate, is approximately as follows: Grabski is a good comrade, brave, willing to get actively engaged, but he is not a strategist and does not think in a very forward-looking manner. The best impression has been made by [Warsaw voivodeship secretary Stanislaw] Kociolek. Kania wished to eliminate him and send him (as ambassador) to the USSR. However, the Soviets rejected him, which has saved him for future political developments. It seems that Kociolek is prepared to fight.

Last week comrades from the CPSU CC consulted with comrades from the SED CC International Relations Department. Discussions with Comrades [CPSU CC Secretary Konstantin] Rusakov, [Deputy CC Department head Oleg B.] Rakhmaninov, and [Deputy CC Department head George] Shakhnazarov show that we and our Soviet comrades evaluate the Polish situation almost identically. Comrade Rusakov pointed out that while the large maneuvers embarked upon, the sending of delegates and discussions by telephone, are indeed useful, so far they have brought no returns. Comrade Rusakov regards the situation as very dangerous, and anticipates that October will show when and to what degree the operation will be carried out. For the time being, though, he does not know how this will take place. Our Soviet comrades are continuing to pressure the Poles intensively, as they do not see for the moment any other choice. The Poles must fight on their own, and no-one can fight for them against KOR and the enemies of socialism. Comrade Rusakov does not agree with the prevailing sentiment in Poland that the Soviet Union should be in the front line of the

fight against the enemies of socialism in Poland. The Soviet Ambassador Aristov visited Kania and protested against the sharp anti-Sovietism in Poland. Kania asked for this to be given to him in writing. This request was met. All of this has led to the realization that Kania's concern is to be able to show concrete proof that he is only doing what he has been forced to do by the Soviet Union.

According to our Soviet comrades, 1968 will not repeat itself in Poland. Polish comrades cannot simply acquire power by means of Soviet tanks. They must fight for that power on their own. Our Soviet comrades state that they did not choose Kania and thus they themselves cannot remove him. That must be done by the Poles.

The idea of calling a meeting of the Warsaw Pact Political Consultative Committee should be discussed. We should not let ourselves to be influenced by Polish statements about the possibility of a general strike, a civil war or the like. The Polish leadership is using this to threaten and blackmail the USSR. The counterrevolution is horrible everywhere. Its street activity too is equally awful everywhere. It is necessary to remain calm and even more necessary to avoid losing patience.

The SED suggested to our Soviet [comrades] that due to the serious situation, closer contact should be maintained between the USSR, GDR, and the "SSR. Rusakov expressed however, that this was too early, even though they do not rule the possibility out for the future. It is only necessary to coordinate on a bilateral basis.

The SED CC feels that our Soviet comrades are having difficulty determining an effective approach towards Poland. In addition to wanting to continue with the present mechanisms, they lack a concept. Their present evaluation of the Polish situation is one hundred percent identical to the evaluation of the SED, unlike their evaluation following the last PUWP Congress. Following the Congress our Soviet comrades acted upon an illusory hope of a possible consolidation of the situation in Poland. The SED very critically evaluated the course and results of the Congress, as Comrade Honecker told Comrade Brezhnev in the Crimea.

Comrade Sieber asked that the CPCz CC inform them about the assistance they were giving Poland, as the SED would like to share in some of the activities. For historical reasons Poles do not like to cooperate with Russians and Germans. This mostly concerns printers, paper and the like. [...]

Notes:

1. Editor's note: In July 1981 Porembski became a member of the PUWP Politburo."