

July 17, 1981

Memorandum from John Stein to the Secretaries of State and Defense and Director of the National Security Agency, 'Polish General Staff Evaluation of Soviet Military Presence and Activities in Poland...'

Citation:

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Summary:

Report outlines the conflicting views of Polish military and government leadership on the implementation of martial law and growing influence of the Soviet military.

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CENTRAL INTELLIGENCE AGENCY
WASHINGTON, D.C. 20505

17 July 1981

MEMORANDUM FOR: The Secretary of State
The Secretary of Defense
Assistant to the President for
National Security Affairs
Director, National Security Agency

FROM : John H. Stein
Deputy Director for Operations

SUBJECT : 1. Polish General Staff Evaluation of Soviet
Military Presence and Activities in Poland
2. Premier Jaruzelski and the Polish Ministry of
Defense's Attitude Regarding Martial Law and
the Current Situation in Poland

1. [redacted] Comment: The following information is from an extremely sensitive source and, therefore, recipients should hold this report very closely.]

2. A reliable source who has excellent access in the Polish Ministry of Defense reported that as of mid-July, the leadership of the Polish General Staff estimated that Soviet military presence in Poland had increased considerably. The General Staff estimated that there are 900 to 1,000 T-55, T-64 and T-72 tanks at the Borne-Sulinowo firing range. [redacted] Comment: The Soviet 90th Guards Tank Division is stationed at Borne-Sulinowo. According to available information, this division is equipped only with T-62 tanks. There are only 322 tanks in a Soviet tank division. Organizationally this consists of 94 tanks in each of three medium tank regiments plus an additional 40 tanks in the division rifle regiment.] According to a Polish commandant at the Borne-Sulinowo firing range, one of the commanders of the Soviet tank regiment told him that the regiment is composed of 27 tank companies totaling approximately 300 combat vehicles and that, in addition, there is a regiment of OSA [SA-8] antiaircraft missiles. [redacted] Comment: In a Soviet tank division there are 27 tank companies, i.e., three companies per battalion, three battalions per regiment, and three regiments per division.] On the basis of the above information,

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the Polish General Staff estimates that in the Borne-Sulinowo area there are three such units called regiments which are in fact armored divisions of a truncated structure consisting primarily of armored and antiaircraft elements. The Polish General Staff has as yet unconfirmed information that a similar situation exists at the Swietoszow firing range and that the number of Soviet tanks in this area exceeds 1,000 combat vehicles [sic]. [redacted]

Comment: The Soviet 20th Guards Tank Division is located at Swietoszow. According to available information, there are not 1,000 tanks at Swietoszow. However, depending upon the definition of combat vehicles, there could well be over 1,000 such vehicles.] Source has no information as to whether the Soviets have officially notified the Polish Government or the Ministry of Defense of this augmentation of Soviet forces. However, Source could not rule out the possibility that the Soviets made oral arrangements with Jaruzelski or General Siwicki.

[redacted] 3. Soviet Marshal Kulikov's proposal for the solution of all Polish problems is military pressure. Since the 29th of June, with the agreement of the Polish General Staff, the Soviet Northern Group of Forces began making its military presence apparent to the Polish civilian population by deploying small subunits in the vicinity of Soviet garrisons. Polish armed forces units and subunits were required to participate along with the Soviet units in exerting psychological pressure on the civilian population. There has been extensive use of this type of military pressure, including exercises up to the company level.

[redacted] 4. In addition to the above, there have been joint Soviet/Polish unit exercises at the Borne-Sulinowo firing range. In one of these exercises a Polish regiment practiced an attack in the direction of a Soviet "military town" while the Soviets directed their combat helicopter units over the regimental grouping. On the 7th of July the commander of the Polish 20th Armored Division was relieved of his command according to rumors because of the commander's "irresponsible attitude toward the Soviets".

5. On the orders of Premier Jaruzelski the Polish General Staff, in cooperation with key ministries, worked out and implemented a "Plan for State Action" for the month of July. The plan was drafted in connection with the Party Congress and with anticipated protest activities. This plan anticipated among other things the following:

- Development of intensified counterintelligence protection on the part of the Ministry of Internal Affairs.

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- Development of law and order actions on the part of the Citizens' Militia.
- Preparation of an emergency communications system for the purpose of governing the country.
- Preparation of an emergency rail communications (diesel locomotives) system.
- Increased availability (i.e., alert duties) for ministries and certain other offices.
- Simulated activation of the Polish Armed Forces field command system.

6. This plan does not envision the introduction of higher states of combat readiness in the Polish Armed Forces. Source also indicated that the current protest and strike activities which have taken place in Poland have not resulted up to now in any military countermeasures by the Polish Ministry of Defense and the decision of the Military Council to increase automatically the readiness of the armed forces in a strike situation referred chiefly to Bydgoszcz.

[] Comment: For details of Source's reporting on the results of the meeting of the Polish National Defense Committee on 19 June, see FIRDB-312/01995-81, TS #818168, dated 24 June 1981.]

7. [] Comment: For Source's earlier reporting on Premier Jaruzelski's attitude regarding the introduction of Martial Law, see FIRDB-312/01362-81, TS #818124, dated 29 April 1981, and FIRDB-312/01995-81, TS #818168, dated 24 June 1981. In earlier reporting Source indicated that Jaruzelski was not only depressed at the prospect of possibly having to introduce Martial Law, but that Source felt that Jaruzelski could not bring himself to implement same and that if it became necessary to do so, he might resign. The following information is an update on Jaruzelski's current attitude regarding the possible implementation of Martial Law.]

8. Source stated that Premier Jaruzelski's position on Martial Law, while basically based on his assessment of the current character of the crisis and his evaluation of the capabilities of the Polish Government to overcome it, is however also influenced by his own origin and personality traits. Jaruzelski was stunned by the scale of violence, abuses and moral decay of the Party and Government which has led to an economic collapse. Against this background, Jaruzelski appreciated labor's and, in reality, the nation's protest. Jaruzelski did not give in to Soviet pressure nor to the Polish political hardliners because he knew that the authorities not only had no political rallying point, but also no power for confronta-

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tion. Source pointed out the following factors which caused Jaruzelski to make a radical re-evaluation of the above-mentioned assessment, which in turn have had a fundamental influence on Jaruzelski's position regarding Martial Law.

9. Jaruzelski currently says: "We are not the only ones responsible for the events of the last ten months." Even more importantly is Jaruzelski's and his closest associates' conviction that the present postulates of Solidarnosc, particularly regarding the questions of the statute on enterprises and self-government, lead directly to a dismantling of Government structures, which in turn would open the way for taking the authority out of the hands of the Polish United Workers' Party. Against this background, there has been a significant stiffening of Jaruzelski's attitude and his readiness to implement Martial Law. As an example of this stiffening of attitude, Source cited the current situation involving LOT Airlines. In order not to permit the establishment of a precedent by allowing Solidarnosc to fill the position of Director General of LOT, the Polish General Staff prepared a plan directed at solving the situation regarding LOT Airlines. The plan has not yet been officially approved by Jaruzelski. Nevertheless, it has already been partially implemented. Under this plan the Polish General Staff forced the Polish Minister of Transportation [Mieczyslaw Zajfryd] to designate General Kowalski as Director General of LOT [] Comment: Dr. Major General Jozef Kowalski has been Director of the Air Force College in Deblin.] The Polish General Staff plan also calls for a number of other moves by the authorities. Among these are:

- Mobilization exercises for LOT.
- Military demonstrations involving LOT, including the creation of a complete civilian aviation enterprise based on military transport aviation regiments from Krakow and Warsaw.
- The takeover by Polish troops of LOT passenger and freight service in time of a strike.

10. In connection with the above, Source cited an incident which occurred on 9 July 1981 when two platoons of Polish "Red Berets" landed at Okecie Airport [a military and civilian airport west of Warsaw].

11. In addition to the above, the Polish General Staff is currently pressuring Jaruzelski to retire the Vice Minister of Transportation General Jan Raczkowski and the Chief of the Aviation Directorate of this Ministry, Colonel Roman [] Comment: This undoubtedly is a reference to Colonel Mieczyslaw Roman,

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Director General of the Central Civilian Aviation Administration of the Ministry of Transportation].

12. Thus, the attitude of Jaruzelski, as well as that of the military leadership, can currently be characterized as one of determination and inflexibility mixed with optimism that implementing extreme measures (i.e., Martial Law) will not be necessary. Source commented, however, that Martial Law could be introduced on a more selective basis either involving only certain geographic areas or implementation of only certain aspects of Martial Law.

13. In response to a query about whether the current strike activities and also the conflict arising from the statute of enterprises constitutes the beginning of the end, General Siwicki answered in the negative and stated: "I am a moderate optimist. They cannot attack us frontally because they realize that they could lose everything. It is possible that again it will be necessary to give a little, but they know that we have nothing more to give and they will have to be satisfied with that." With regard to arguments used by other senior officers of the Ministry of Defense against instituting Martial Law, Source cited the following primary arguments:

- The ineffectiveness of this form of action by the State to restore normal work patterns. In connection with this, many officers made reference to the Hungarian and Polish experience (of 1970) where only political decisions relaxed the tensions and caused a return to work.
- The totally unjustified use of troops for internal purposes against one's own people.
- The lack of appropriate forces of the Ministry of Internal Affairs and the armed forces. In 1970, although all the forces were used for internal purposes, actually they accomplished very little.
- If we can't make it on our own, this would be the signal for the starting of intervention by Soviet forces. In this event, civil war on a broad scale would be inevitable. Estimates have been made that in such an event, at least 200,000 Poles would die.

14. Source commented that the leading cadre of the Polish Ministry of Defense viewed Jaruzelski's political achievements in a decidedly negative manner. He is being criticized for the same

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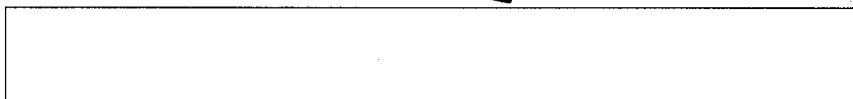
reasons he had been criticized when he was only Minister of Defense. Namely, procrastination, lack of decisiveness, idealism, and viewing the world as he wished it to be, which is totally unrelated to reality. Frequently the charge is heard in the Ministry of Defense that he has missed the opportunity to set many things in order with the help of the military. However, in spite of this he is generally given credit for skillful handling of the complexities of steering a middle course between the Soviets and Solidarnosc.

15. Source, who knows Jaruzelski, characterizes him as very exhausted physically and mentally. Before departing for the 11th Plenum he confided to his closest collaborators an indication of his desire to resign. His general fatigue and exhaustion is also evidenced by the fact that he began to draft his report to the Sejm only after the conclusion of the 11th Plenum. The last pages of his draft report were given to him at the last moment, just before he climbed onto the Sejm podium. In spite of these pressures, Jaruzelski presently appears to have decided to retain his Government post even after the Congress. Whereas Jaruzelski previously did not smoke, he now smokes up to 40 cigarettes a day and also uses energy pills.

16. According to Source, the current Polish political leadership believes that the wave of fascination with Solidarnosc has largely ebbed and that the Solidarnosc movement reveals real internal disagreements. The leadership also believes that Solidarnosc can be held responsible for the present difficulties. The leadership also believes that at present, if it comes to a conflict with Solidarnosc, the balance of forces would be more in favor of the Party and the Government. However, there is some concern in the leadership regarding the clergy's activity in support of the Confederation of Independent Poland.


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