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January 28, 1982

Intelligence Information Cable, 'Measures Taken to Ensure Reliability of Polish Conscripts'

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Summary:

Report addresses Polish leadership concerns of Solidarnosc influence on young conscripts in the Polish army. It includes solutions such as isolating younger people in more rural stations and separating them into sub units.

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English

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Intelligence Information Cable



[Redacted]

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CITE TDFIRDB-315/D1801-82

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(classification)

DIST 28 JANUARY 1981

REPORT CLASS

[Redacted]

COUNTRY POLAND

SUBJECT MEASURES TAKEN TO ENSURE THE RELIABILITY OF POLISH CONSCRIPTS (DOI: 1981)

SOURCE A FORMER GENERAL STAFF OFFICER WHO MADE THE FOLLOWING COMMENTS BASED ON HIS CONSIDERABLE PAST EXPERIENCE AND CONTACTS. HE HAS REPORTED RELIABLY IN THE PAST.

1. DURING 1981, PRECEDING THE IMPOSITION OF MARTIAL LAW IN POLAND, THE POLISH MILITARY LEADERSHIP BECAME INCREASINGLY CONCERNED WITH THE RELIABILITY OF ITS CONSCRIPTS IN THE FACE OF SOLIDARITY ACTIVISM. SEVERAL STEPS WERE TAKEN TO BOLSTER THAT RELIABILITY AND STAVE OFF SOLIDARITY INFLUENCE AMONG THE RANK AND FILE MILITARY, WHICH THE LEADERSHIP KNEW WOULD BE NEEDED IF A DECISION WERE REACHED TO IMPLEMENT THE MARTIAL LAW PLANNING THEN UNDER WAY. THESE STEPS INCLUDED THE STATIONING OF NEW CONSCRIPTS OUTSIDE THEIR PROVINCE OF RESIDENCE, CONCENTRATING NEW CONSCRIPTS IN SEPARATE (ISOLATED) SUB-UNITS, AND HOLDING OVER CONSCRIPTS DUE TO BE RELEASED, WHILE POSTPONING THE INDUCTION OF A NEW CONSCRIPT CLASS.

SOME OF THESE MEASURES WERE PLANNED AND AT LEAST PARTIALLY

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IMPLEMENTED WITH THE SPRING 1981 INDUCTION PERIOD, WHILE OTHERS WERE APPLIED IN THE FALL 1981 INDUCTION. [REDACTED]

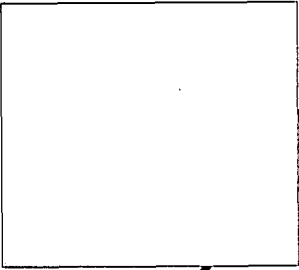
COMMENT: IN POLISH PRACTICE, ROUGHLY ONE-FOURTH OF POLISH CONSCRIPTS COMPLETE THEIR 24-MONTH TERM OF SERVICE AND ARE RELEASED, WHILE A COMPARABLE NUMBER ARE INDUCTED TWICE YEARLY, IN APRIL AND OCTOBER.]

2. TWO CONCEPTS WERE WORKED OUT BEFORE THE SPRING 1981 INDUCTION PERIOD. ONE CALLED FOR INDUCTEES TO BE ASSIGNED TO CERTAIN GROUND FORCE UNITS TO COME FROM OUTSIDE THE LOCAL AREA. THIS WAS APPLIED TO UNITS THAT WERE INTENDED, UNDER THE MARTIAL LAW CONTINGENCY PLANNING, TO BE ASSIGNED TO PARTICIPATE IN ANTI-SOLIDARITY ACTION IN THE LOCAL AREA. NO SPECIAL CONSIDERATION WAS GIVEN TO UNITS THAT WERE TO ACT OUTSIDE THEIR LOCAL AREA UNDER MARTIAL LAW. THIS ATTENTION TO AREA OF PLANNED ACTION VERSUS PLACE OF ORIGIN APPLIED ONLY TO NEW CONSCRIPTS; NO EFFORT WAS MADE TO REASSIGN SOLDIERS ALREADY SERVING IN THE UNITS AFFECTED.

3. ANOTHER CONCEPT WORKED OUT IN SPRING 1981 CALLED FOR NEW CONSCRIPTS TO BE CONCENTRATED IN SEPARATE SUB-UNITS. NORMALLY CONSCRIPTS MANNING ANY GIVEN UNIT WOULD REPRESENT A BALANCED GROUP OF THE FOUR CONSCRIPT CLASSES ON ACTIVE

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DUTY, WITH 18, 12, 6, OR 0 MONTHS OF EXPERIENCE AT THE BEGINNING OF A SIX-MONTH TRAINING CYCLE. IN A BATTALION, EACH OF THE THREE SUBORDINATE COMPANIES WOULD HAVE TROOPS OF ROUGHLY EQUAL TRAINING EXPERIENCE, AND AT THE END OF EACH SIX-MONTH CYCLE, EACH COMPANY WOULD LOSE ROUGHLY ONE-THIRD OF THE BATTALION'S CONSCRIPTS COMPLETING THEIR TERMS OF SERVICE AND WOULD GAIN ONE-THIRD OF THE NEW CONSCRIPTS ASSIGNED TO THE BATTALION AS REPLACEMENTS. UNDER THE CONCEPT WORKED OUT IN 1981, NEW CONSCRIPTS TO BE ASSIGNED TO A BATTALION, WHILE EXPERIENCED CONSCRIPTS IN THAT COMPANY WOULD BE REASSIGNED TO THE BATTALION'S OTHER TWO COMPANIES. THE INTENT OF THIS CONCEPT WAS TO ISOLATE NEW CONSCRIPTS, WHO WOULD HAVE GREATER AND MORE RECENT EXPOSURE TO SOLIDARITY, AND WHO WERE PRESUMABLY MORE SYMPATHETIC TO SOLIDARITY'S GOALS AND ACTIONS. THEIR INFLUENCE ON OTHER CONSCRIPTS WOULD THUS BE CONTAINED. FROM A MILITARY POINT OF VIEW, THE INHERENT WEAKNESS OF THIS CONCEPT WAS THAT IT SACRIFICED THE COMBAT READINESS OF THE SUB-UNITS MANNED BY NEW RECRUITS AND COMPLICATED THE NORMAL TRAINING PLAN OF THE LARGER UNIT. IT IS CERTAIN THAT THIS CONCEPT WAS WORKED OUT BY THE SPRING OF 1981 BUT THE EXTENT TO WHICH

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IT WAS ACTUALLY APPLIED IN THE SPRING 1981 INDUCTION IS UNCERTAIN.

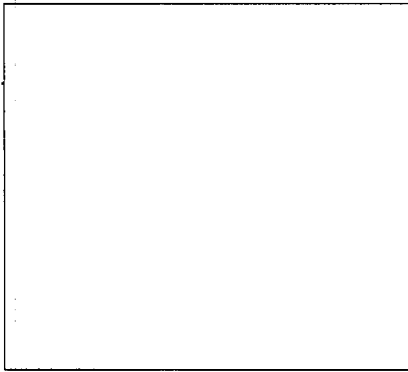
4. AS THE SITUATION IN POLAND BECAME MORE SERIOUS (BY THE FALL OF 1981), AND THE REGIME CONCLUDED THAT THE IMPOSITION OF MARTIAL LAW WAS INEVITABLE, SPECIAL MEASURES WERE TAKEN IN OCTOBER TO RETAIN CONSCRIPTS DUE TO BE RELEASED AND SIMULTANEOUSLY TO POSTPONE THE INDUCTION OF NEW RECRUITS. THE PURPOSE OF THIS MOVE WAS TO RETAIN THE MOST TRAINED, BEST DISCIPLINED TROOPS, WHO HAD BEEN IN MILITARY SERVICE SINCE OCTOBER 1979, DURING THE ENTIRE LIFE OF SOLIDARITY, WHILE AVOIDING THE DILUTION OF THE OVERALL RELIABILITY OF THE FORCE WITH NEW CONSCRIPTS.

5. IT SHOULD ALSO BE NOTED THAT IN MANY LOCALITIES CHURCHES WERE ASKING YOUNG MEN SUBJECT TO THE DRAFT TO SWEAR LOYALTY TO THE WORKERS AND PLEDGE NEVER TO USE WEAPONS AGAINST THEM. THUS, THE MILITARY LEADERSHIP BELIEVED IT DID NOT HAVE THE TIME NEEDED TO TRAIN SUCH DRAFTEES SUFFICIENTLY TO TAKE THE MILITARY OATH IN POSSIBLE CONTRADICTION TO THE CHURCH OATH. THEREFORE, DISCHARGES WERE HELD UP AND NEW CONSCRIPTION DELAYED. THIS PLAN WAS NOT IMPLEMENTED ACROSS



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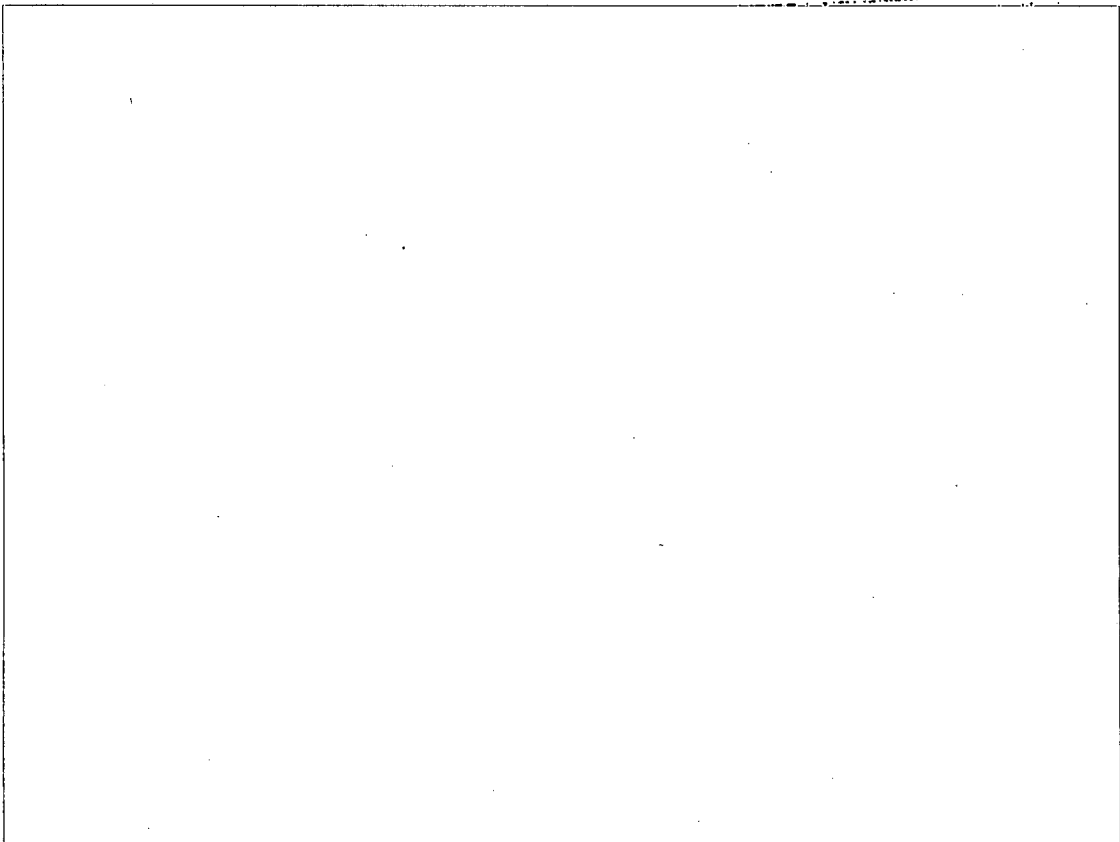


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THE BOARD BUT WAS GENERALLY APPLIED AMONG GROUND FORCES, THOSE
INTENDED TO BE EMPLOYED ON THE STREET TO ENFORCE MARTIAL LAW.
THE NAVY, AIR, AND AIR DEFENSE FORCES EXPERIENCED A NORMAL
FALL CONSCRIPTION.



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