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## POLAND: ANNUAL REVIEW 1984

(Her Majesty's Ambassador at Warsaw to the Secretary of State  
for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs.)

## SUMMARY

Introduction (paragraph 1)

1. 1984 was a year of continued grudging acceptance of the regime.

Internal (paragraphs 2-12)

2. All significant political prisoners were released. The murder of Father Popieluszko caused profound shock but produced a fillip for the opposition, otherwise in disarray. The position of the Church remained strong. The new Trade Unions slowly expanded. The economy remained in a mess but debt rescheduling negotiations moved forward.

External (paragraphs 13-17)

3. No change in Poland's relations with the Soviet Union. The first high level Western visitors since Martial Law.

Anglo-Polish Relations (paragraphs 18-22)

4. Mr Rifkind's visit took our relations a step forward with a balanced combination of contacts with the authorities and the opposition. Trade in both directions made progress. More liberal Polish passport procedures led to visa problems.

The Future (paragraphs 23-28)

5. No signs of internal change or substantial improvement in the economy. Polish/US relations, debt rescheduling and IMF membership could make progress.
6. Poland still the most liberal regime in Eastern Europe. It is also the most receptive to Western influence.

Warsaw  
31 December 1984

Sir,

1. 1984 was a year of continued grudging acceptance of the regime. Increased confidence was shown by a sweeping amnesty. The murder by members of the Security Services of the prominent opposition priest, Father Popieluszko, caused profound shock but the Government's handling of the case was skilful. General Jaruzelski continues in command but unloved. The economy showed only marginal improvement. Mr Rifkind's visit took Anglo/Polish relations a step forward.



## INTERNAL

### (a) The Government

2. The most stiking decision of the Government in 1984 was the comprehensive and courageous amnesty introduced in July. Over 320,000 people benefitted from it in various ways, including 630 political prisoners. So many convicted criminals were freed that the amnesty was blamed for a subsequent wave of petty crime. 20 political prisoners have not been released as they had also been convicted of criminal offences not covered by the amnesty, such as theft of printing presses or the use of explosives. Two leading opposition figures, Lis and Mierzejewski, were excluded from the amnesty and had remained in detention because the charges against them included treason. When this was dropped they were released in December. This meant that all those political prisoners who had been the subject of Western demarches were at liberty.

3. Father Popieluszko, a well-known and charismatic young pro-Solidarity priest, was kidnapped and murdered in October. This was an unprecedented act in Poland and produced a wave of shock, including, apparently, for the authorities. His driver escaped and lived to tell the tale. The grave is already a well attended shrine. From the outset the authorities adopted a policy of thorough investigation and on 27 December the trial opened in Torun of four Security Service officials. Wide-spread speculation persisted that more senior figures were the instigators. General Jaruzelski took over responsibility for Party matters in the Ministry of Internal Affairs but rumours of removal of Politburo hardliners have proved unfounded so far and the year ended with no major personnel changes.

### (b) The Opposition

4. The reaction to Popieluszko's murder gave a fillip to Solidarity's morale and more of their slogans were displayed during his funeral than on any occasion since the Papal visit. Walesa spoke briefly but effectively to the crowd of some quarter of a million. Solidarity spokesmen also achieved more international coverage than of late. Apart from this, Solidarity had little cause for satisfaction. Conflicting messages by its leaders revealed a lack of coherent policy. Walesa looked even more a figure of the past. Despite calls for a boycott of the elections to local Councils in June, the official figure of a 75% turnout seemed not too exaggerated. Minor demonstrations took place on the usual anniversaries but all were quickly suppressed. A few demonstrators, including some well-known Solidarity figures, received short prison sentences.

5. After the Popieluszko murder, groups to monitor human rights, largely with Solidarity membership, were set up in several towns. Their avowed aim was to seek clarification of past and potential abuses by the Security Services. The authorities speedily let it be known that they regarded the groups as illegal and warned off Western journalists. By the end of the year they were quiescent.

### (c) The Church

6. The Popieluszko affair did not seriously ruffle Church/State relations and it was, for them, a generally calm year with little progress in their bilateral contacts. There was only one meeting (in January) between General Jaruzelski and the Primate. There was no progress on the law on the Church's legal status or on the establishment of diplomatic relations with the Vatican. The Church played a key role in the maintenance of social peace and its role was even more delicate as it became once again the coherent focus of opposition to the State.

### (d) The Trade Unions

7. The Government-sponsored trade union movement made slow progress and by the end of the year was said to number 5 million and in November a "National Agreement of Trade Unions" was set up. Intellectual unions stagnated and barristers came in for particular criticism.



(e) The Economy

8. The absence of central decisions on the allocation of resources, coupled with basic deficiencies in the economic structure, meant that the economy remained a mess. Nevertheless, the year should show a modest 2.6% growth in national income. Trade with the West remained one of the areas where targets were not reached. The inflation rate fell to 18%, although slower than hoped. Wages rose by 19% but the Government appeared to have persuaded the population, at least temporarily, that price rises are unavoidable. The attitude of the Polish worker has not changed and the average 34 hour working week remains. With an average 15-year wait for a flat and minimal improvement in the availability of goods in shops, the Poles still have little incentive.

9. The harvest was once again good, although imports of grain remained considerable. Large sums also had to be spent to maintain the level of the meat ration.

10. Although Government leaders, particularly Jaruzelski himself, lost no opportunity to support the idea of economic reform, passive opposition from groups as diverse as workers, management, and officials, coupled with the absence of a coherent central economic policy, have meant that little real progress was achieved.

11. The agreement with the Western commercial banks on debt rescheduling was finally concluded in the Spring. The terms were more generous than the Poles could reasonably have expected but they do not yet seem to have taken full advantage of the credits they received. The discussions on the rescheduling of the Government debt dragged on but by the end of the year were near conclusion.

12. Discussion continued on the Church Agricultural Fund which envisages the channelling of Western money to Polish private agriculture through the Church, but final agreement was not reached. The Polish authorities consistently pointed out that the sums now spoken of as forthcoming are insignificant and only a fraction of those first mooted. We told our EC partners that we would not support a contribution from Community funds.

EXTERNAL

13. The Soviet Prime Minister Tikhonov attended the 40th Anniversary of the foundation of the Polish People's Republic in Warsaw in July but in general the Soviet Union kept a low profile on Polish affairs. There remained no discernible difference from the Soviet line in Polish statements on general foreign policy issues. Polish notice of withdrawal from the ILO received full Soviet bloc support. Regular contact with other Eastern European countries continued and Jaruzelski paid one-day visits to Hungary, East Germany and Czechoslovakia.

14. Polish/American relations remained generally sour with regular anti-American polemics. There was some contact on civil aviation and scientific co-operation. American opposition to Polish membership of the IMF was lifted in December after the release of Lis and Mierzejewski. West Germany was the subject of sustained criticism, particularly because of the alleged 'revanchist' views of some Government figures. France was close behind as a butt for vilification.

15. The Greek Prime Minister, Papandreou was the first Western Head of Government to visit Poland since Martial Law and his statements greatly pleased his hosts. The Austrian and Finnish Foreign Ministers also came. The eleventh hour postponement of Mr Genscher's visit came as a surprise to the Poles who affected not to understand that their refusal of a visa to an accompanying journalist was the final deciding factor. Subsequent Polish policy statements have left the way open for the reinstatement of the visit.



16. Mr Andreotti then became in December the first NATO Foreign Minister to visit Poland since Martial Law. His visit followed the pattern of Mr Rifkind's - a finely calculated balance of an official programme, combined with contacts with the opposition and homage at the grave of Father Popieluszko.

17. Foreign Minister Olszowski made visits to Afghanistan, Cuba, Argentina and Nicaragua.

#### ANGLO-POLISH RELATIONS

18. Apart from your meeting with Olszowski in New York in September, the main Anglo/Polish event of the year was the visit by Mr Rifkind in October - the first by a British Minister in three years. Routine political talks at Under-Secretary level had taken place in Warsaw in May. Mr Rifkind was received by two Deputy Prime Ministers and had useful, if largely unrevealing, talks on international and bilateral matters. Mr Rifkind pulled no punches on such issues as Afghanistan and the continued detention of political prisoners. His activities outside the official programme, notably meeting Solidarity figures at my house and laying a wreath on Father Popieluszko's grave, were strongly criticised by the Government spokesman after Mr Rifkind's departure. The visit was nevertheless characterised as "beneficial". It set a precedent for future Western visits which caused the Poles concern.

19. The British Council continued its wide range of activities in favourable conditions and agreement was reached on a second reading room outside Warsaw at Wrocław. Our Polish language magazine 'BRYTANIA' successfully reappeared with a circulation of 25,000.

20. In the trade field we retained our place as Poland's second largest Western trading partner, as did Poland the second place after the Soviet Union for our trade with the Eastern bloc. Our exports rose 7% in the first eleven months of the year and 17% more visiting businessmen called on the Embassy. Polish exports rose 48%, largely due to increased demand for coal because of the coal strike. The year should end with a surplus in Poland's favour close to £100 million.

21. The first meeting of the Anglo-Polish Joint Trade Commission since 1981 took place in October. Lord Shackleton, as Head of the East European Trade Council Delegation, was conspicuously well received during a visit in September. British participation in the Poznan Trade Fair again increased and we returned to the British Pavilion after a gap of two years.

22. During the year, the Polish Government's more liberal policy in granting passports led to great pressure on our visa issuing procedures. Some 26,000 applications were received and delays of five months in obtaining a visa became the norm in the summer months, despite a considerable increase in our visa staff. The Polish press commented gleefully on the obstruction put on private travel by our and other Western Missions. The cost of the implementation of Home Office requirements, the most stringent in Eastern Europe, was some £½ million to the FCO Vote. Some minor relaxations were introduced but, with the likelihood of increased numbers of Polish passports in 1985, next year presents a similarly bleak picture.

#### THE FUTURE

23. With no signs of effective pressures for political change, Jaruzelski looks like remaining in command and capable of balancing the extremes, such as they are, of the Party. There are no real incentives for him to move to any genuine dialogue and popular support is likely to elude him. The authorities seem well able to control demonstrations and will keep a strict eye on such developments as human rights monitoring movements.

24. Contacts with the West are likely to improve with more ministerial visits. Relations with the United States look set on a more favourable course and an American Ambassador could be here in the New Year.



25. Anglo-Polish relations should continue to improve and our exports look set to maintain their growth. A solution to the coal strike would set back Polish coal exports.

26. The economy cannot expect much improvement and the most Poles can hope for is a modest increase in national income but with continuing housing, consumer goods and food shortages. Even with a future growth of 4%, which is optimistic, the 1978 pre-crisis level would not be reached until 1989. Agreement on the rescheduling of Government debt should bring with it some degree of international financial respectability. This should lead to progress on Poland's readmission to the IMF. Polish expectations of credit from this and other Western sources still appear to choose to ignore the harsher realities of the international financial scene.

27. It would be unrealistic to expect that Poland can be weaned away from its Warsaw Pact responsibilities or induced to take any line on international issues which would erode the Soviet position. Nevertheless, Poland remains the most liberal regime in Eastern Europe and the Poles the most receptive to Western influence. We should do all we can to widen their exposure to Western thinking. We can do this by visits which, like Mr Rifkind's, give an opportunity for senior Poles to hear views they would not otherwise receive. We should also make the best of our cultural achievements accessible to Polish audiences.

28. All in all, we have a good basis on which to expand our political, commercial and cultural contacts next year. It is a chance we should not miss. This is even more the case as other Western countries, such as the United States, West Germany and France are in balk in varying degrees leaving us with the pole position.

I am, Sir  
Yours faithfully

J A L MORGAN