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TO IMMEDIATE FCO

TELNO 1016 OF 22ND DECEMBER 1981

INFO IMMEDIATE: WASHINGTON, MOSCOW, UKDEL NATO, PARIS, BONN,
MODUK

INFO SAVING: EAST BERLIN, PRAGUE, SOFIA, BUCHAREST, BUDAPEST,
UKMIS NEW YORK, UKREP BRUSSELS, HELSINKI AND STOCKHOLM.

FROM MELHUI SH.

POLISH SITUATION.

1. SOURCES OF INFORMATION SEEM TO BE DRYING UP. THIS IS PROBABLY PARTLY BECAUSE LESS IS GOING ON AND PARTLY BECAUSE THE AUTHORITIES HAVE BEEN SUCCESSFUL IN SUPRESSING INFORMATION, AT LEAST ABOUT EVENTS OUTSIDE WARSAW.

2. THE CANADIAN EMBASSY INFORM US THAT A VISA APPLICANT FROM SZCZECIN TOLD THEM THAT THE DOCKERS THERE WERE ON AN "ITALIAN STRIKE" (THEY TURN UP FOR WORK BUT DO NOTHING). WE HEAR CONTINUING REPORTS OF DISTURBANCES IN GDANSK AND OF DEATHS THERE AND IN WROCLAW. NO-ONE HOWEVER SEEMS ABLE TO PUT A FIGURE ON THE NUMBER OF DEATHS. WE ALSO HEAR OF RUMOURS OF DESERTIONS IN THE ARMY, MOST PERSISTENTLY IN THE GDANSK REGION.

3. STORIES OF THE CONDITION OF THOSE INTERNED VARY. ONE RUMOUR SAYS THAT 32 IN TOTAL HAVE DIED OF FROST-BITE. (TEMPERATURES AT NIGHT ARE ABOUT -20 DEGREES C AT THE MOMENT.) OTHER RUMOURS SUGGEST THAT THOSE WHO WERE INTERNED INITIALLY ARE IN REASONABLY GOOD CONDITION, BUT THOSE WHO WERE ROUNDED-UP LATER WERE PUT INTO TENTS BECAUSE THE PLACES ORIGINALLY PREPARED FOR INTERNEES WERE FULL UP. THESE LATTER ACCOUNTS RESEMBLE VERY CLOSELY WHAT ARCHBISHOP GLEMP TOLD ME YESTERDAY (OUR TELNO 1002).

4. IT IS PERSISTENTLY, AND PROBABLY AUTHENTICALLY, REPORTED THAT THE CITY OF RADOM HAS BEEN SEALED OFF MORE OR LESS FROM THE BEGINNING OF MARTIAL LAW. MANY EXPLANATIONS FOR THIS ARE POSSIBLE. BUT, AS RADOM WAS THE CENTRE OF THE STUDENTS CONFLICT THAT PRECEDED THE DECLARATION OF MARTIAL LAW, IT MAY BE THAT PARTICULARLY HARSH MEASURES HAVE BEEN EMPLOYED TO PACIFY THE CITY. RADOM WAS THE SCENE OF VIOLENT RIOTING IN THE 1976 TROUBLES.

5. THE ITALIAN AMBASSADOR TOLD ME IN CONFIDENCE TODAY THAT ARCHBISHOP POGGI'S ATTEMPTS TO SET UP SOME FORM OF DIALOGUE BETWEEN SOLIDARITY (WALESA) AND THE MARTIAL COUNCIL (JARUZELSKI) HAD GOT STUCK. HE WAS STILL HOPING TO MAKE PROGRESS AND WOULD STAY ON LONGER.

FCO PLEASE PASS SAVING TO ALL SAVING ADDRESSEES

JAMES

BT