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TO IMMEDIATE F C O

TELEGRAM NUMBER 768 OF 4TH DECEMBER

FOR INFO ROUTINE WASHINGTON, UKDEL NATO, BONN, PARIS, WARSAW,  
EAST BERLIN AND PRAGUE.

*Read full*

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SOVIET/POLISH RELATIONS.

1. PRAVDA OF 3 DECEMBER CARRIED A FAIRLY FULL REPORT OF KANIA'S SPEECH. ALTHOUGH IT TOUCHED ON HIS EXHORTATIONS TO CONSERVATIVE ELEMENTS WITHIN THE POLISH PARTY TO ACCEPT RECENT CHANGES, IT CARRIED HIS ATTACKS ON ELEMENTS WITHIN SOLIDARITY AT MUCH GREATER LENGTH. IT REPEATED HIS WARNINGS THAT THERE WERE NOT, AND COULD NOT BE, TWO POWER CENTRES IN ONE STATE AND THAT THE TIME OF CRISIS HAD ARRIVED IN POLAND. THE PRAVDA ACCOUNT DID NOT APPEAR TO HIDE THE BLEAKNESS OF KANIA'S ASSESSMENT: AND WILL HAVE HAD THE EFFECT OF PROVIDING A FULL EXPLANATION FOR PARTY MEMBERS HERE OF THE CURRENT DIFFICULTIES IN POLAND AND HENCE OF THE CASE FOR INTERVENTION, KF THAT PROVES NECESSARY.

2. THERE HAS NEVERTHELESS BEEN A STRIKING ABSENCE OF AUTHORITATIVE COMMENT IN THE SOVIET PRESS ON EVENTS IN POLAND. PETROV HAS REMAINED SILENT SINCE 27 SEPTEMBER., AND ALTHOUGH THERE HAS BEEN PLENTY OF MATERIAL IN THE SOVIET PRESS BEARING WITNESS TO CONCERN ABOUT POLAND THERE HAS BEEN ALMOST NONE INDICATING AN ACTIVE POLICY LINE. NEITHER HAS THE SOVIET PRESS YET REFLECTED THE VARIOUS WARNINGS ISSUED BY THE WEST, WHICH COULD EASILY HAVE BEEN DRESSED UP AS PROVOCATIVE AND INTERVENTIONIST. I WOULD NOT BE SURPRISED IF, BEFORE LONG, THEY STAKE OUT THEIR OWN POSITION RATHER MORE CLEARLY, BUT FOR THE PRESENT, WHAT THEY APPEAR TO HAVE DONE IS TO UNDERLINE INDIRECTLY THEIR READINESS AND PREPAREDNESS TO INTERVENE MILITARILY IF NECESSARY, THUS ATTEMPTING TO DISPEL ANY ILLUSIONS IN POLAND ON THIS SCORE. THE INDICATIONS OF POSSIBLE ACTION WERE NO DOUBT TIMED TO COINCIDE WITH THE PLENARY MEETING OF THE POLISH CENTRAL COMMITTEE AND TO COLOUR ITS DELIBERATIONS. THE RUSSIANS WILL BE LOOKING FOR EVIDENCE BETWEEN

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NOW AND THE POLISH PARTY CONGRESS THAT THE LESSON HAS GONE HOME, THAT THE PARTY WILL BE ABLE TO RE-GROUP AND RESTORE ITS AUTHORITY AND THAT THE THREAT OF FORCE WILL HAVE PROVED SUFFICIENT TO OBTAIN THE NEED TO USE IT. THEY CERTAINLY CANNOT YET REGARD THE SITUATION AS EITHER STABLE OR SATISFACTORY AND NEED TO OPEN THE OPTION OF INTERVENTION, PROBABLY IN SUPPORT OF EVENTUAL REPRESSIVE ACTION BY THE POLISH GOVERNMENT ITSELF.

KEEBLE

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