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FM WARSAW 081630Z DEC

TO IMMEDIATE FCO

TELEGRAM NUMBER 515 OF 8 DECEMBER

INFO ROUTINE MOSCOW PRAGUE SOFIA BUDAPEST BUCHAREST EAST
BERLIN BELGRADE UKDEL NATO WASHINGTON PARIS BONN HELSINKI
MODUK

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POLISH REACTION TO WARSAW PACT SUMMIT

1. ON 6 DECEMBER THE POLITBURO MET TO DISCUSS THE MOSCOW WARSAW PACT SUMMIT. IT EXPRESSED SATISFACTION WITH THE WARSAW PACT'S CONFIDENCE IN THE ABILITY OF POLAND'S HRRKING CLASS TO SOVLVE HER PROBLEMS. THE POLITBURO ALSO SAID THAT IT VALUED HIGHLY THE ECONOMCI HELP GIVEN BY OTHER MEMBERS OF THE WARSAW PACT AND THE POSSIBILITY OF FURTHER HELP IN THE FUTURE.
2. MY EC COLLEAGUES AND I THINK THAT THE MILITARY DEMONSTRATIONS BY THE USSR HAVE SOBERED THE POPULATION: THAT WITH THIS RESPITE THE REGIME IS EXPECTED TO RE-ESTABLISH CONTROL WITHIN PERHAPS A FEW MONTHS AND THAT THE REGIME ACCEPTS THIS AS ITS LAST CHANCE AND IS READY TO ADOPT A MUCH TOUGHER LINE TOWARDS "ANTI-SOCIALIST ELEMENTS".
3. THE POLISH LEADERSHIP WILL NOW HAVE TO HAMMER HOME THE OTHER ELEMENTS IN THE SUMMIT COMMUNIQUE (IN PARTICULAR THE MESSAGE THAT POLAND MUST CONTINUE TO BE A SOCIALIST STATE) USING THE BRPGTHING-SPACE GRANTED. DHEIR OBJECTIVE MUST BE TO TRY TO PUT THE COUNTRY BACK ON TO THE RIGHT LINES WHILE AVOIDING ANOTHER CONFRONTATION WITH THE UNIONS. TODAY'S STATEMENT FROM TASS ABOUT REACTIONARIES SOUNDS A BIT OMINOUS. BUT ASSUMING IT IS INTENDED ONLY TO KEEP THE PRESSURE UP THE NEXT DANGER POINT IS LIKELY TO BE ON DEC 16 WHEN THE MEMORIAL TO THOSE KILLED IN THE GDANSK RIOTS OF 1970 IS TO BE UNVEILED. THERE ARE PLENTY OF YOUNGER POLES WHO ARE NOT MUCH DISTURBED AT THE THOUGHT OF A CLASH WITH THE AUTHORITIES OR CONCERNED WITH THE SECURITY OF EUROPE WHICH THEY THINK BETRAYED THEM AT YALTA.
4. IF THIS PASSES OFF SUCCESSFULLY, 31 DECEMBER IS THE DEADLINE FOR A NUMBER OF PROMISES MADE IN THE GDANSK FNUAGREEMENT WHICH MAY HAVE TO BE BROKEN. NOW THAT THE GOVERNMENT HAS DECIDED TO DELAY THE INTRODUCTION OF MEAT-RATIONING UNTIL 1 FEBRUARY, A CRISIS ARISING FROM THE GOVERNMENTS INABILITY TO DELIVER THE RATION IT PROMISES CANNOT ARISE UNTIL AFTER THAT DATE.

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BUT THAT TOO COULD SPARK OFF CONFRONTATION. THERE IS ALSO THE CONSTANT POSSIBILITY OF INDUSTRIAL ACTION FOLLOWING NON-IMPLEMENTATION OF PAY AGREEMENTS. THE REUTERS' CORRESPONDENT TOLD US TODAY THAT SOLIDARITY PLAN TO HOLD NATIONWIDE DIRECT ELECTIONS TO THEIR NATIONAL COUNCIL - WHICH WOULD IN EFFECT BE POPULAR ELECTIONS WITH AN ELECTORATE OF OVER 10 MILLION. THIS WOULD ALSO BE CRITICAL.

5. THE DECISION TO DELAY MEAT-RATIONING UNTIL 1 FEBRUARY, WHICH WAS ANNOUNCED OVER THE WEEKEND, MAY HAVE BEEN TAKEN BECAUSE THE GOVERNMENT KNOWS THAT IT CANNOT DELIVER THE PROMISED RATION, OR IT MAY SIMPLY REFLECT ADMINISTRATIVE PROBLEMS. PSYCHOLOGICALLY, IT WILL HAVE A HELPFUL EFFECT ON MOST POLES WHO WILL FEEL THAT THEIR MEAT SUPPLY HAS NOT BEEN RESTRICTED. BUT IN PRACTICE, IT WILL MEAN THAT THE AVERAGE POLE GETS LESS MEAT IN JANUARY RATHER THAN MORE.

6. TO ACHIEVE OUR MAJOR OBJECTIVE OF PREVENTING SOVIET INTERVENTION IT SEEMS TO ME THAT OUR WARNINGS OF THE CONSEQUENCES MUST NOT ON THE ONE HAND ENCOURAGE THE RASHER POLES (SINCE ACTION BY THEM WOULD PRECIPITATE INTERVENTION) NOR AT THE OTHER EXTREME SUGGEST ANY COMFORT FOR OVER-REPRESSIVE ACTION BY THE POLISH GOVT. I VERY MUCH AGREE WITH YOUR REPORTED STATEMENT THAT THERE MIGHT NOW BE A TRUCE ON PUBLIC STATEMENTS, TO BE REPLACED BY MORE PRIVATE WARNINGS TO THE SOVIET UNION.

PRIDHAM

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