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FM WARSAW 261500Z JAN

TO IMMEDIATE FCO

TELEGRAM NUMBER 57 OF 26 JAN

INFO MOSCOW PRAGUE EAST BERLIN UKDEL NATO MODUK

SAVING TO SOFIA BUDAPEST BUCHAREST BELGRADE WASHINGTON
PARIS BONN HELSINKI STOCKHOLM UKMIS NEW YORK UKDEL BRUSSELS

MIPT

POLISH STRIKES

I DID NOT CONSIDER THAT SOVIET INTERVENTION WAS LIKELY AT ANY TIME IN 1980. BUT I HAVE ALWAYS THOUGHT THAT CLEAR EVIDENCE OF THE POLISH GOVERNMENT LOSING CONTROL OF THE COUNTRY WOULD MAKE IT VERY DIFFICULT FOR THE RUSSIANS NOT TO INTERVENE.

2. WE NOW HAVE A SITUATION IN WHICH THE GOVERNMENT HAVE INSTRUCTED THE PEOPLE TO WORK WHILE SOLIDARITY HAVE TOLD THEM NOT TO; AND TO A LARGE EXTENT THE PEOPLE HAVE OBEYED SOLIDARITY. THIS IS A SITUATION OF A DIFFERENT ORDER FROM THE UNCO-ORDINATED REGIONAL STRIKES OF LAST YEAR, AND EVEN FROM THE EARLIER CENTRALLY-DIRECTED WARNING STRIKES WHICH DID NOT TAKE PLACE AGAINST A SPECIFIC GOVERNMENT ORDER TO GO TO WORK. THERE HAS STILL BEEN NO DISORDER AND THE OSTENSIBLE ISSUE IS NON-POLITICAL AND WITH THE LEGITIMATE FIELD OF A TRADE UNION. BUT THIS IS A CLEAR CHALLENGE BY A NATIONALLY-ORGANISED BODY AGAINST THE AUTHORITY OF THE GOVERNMENT. IF SOLIDARITY WINS UNEQUIVOCALLY OR, AS IS MORE LIKELY, SECURES A PATCHED -UP BUT FAVOURABLE COMPROMISE, THE TEMPTATION TO FOLLOW SIMILAR TACTICS ON THE OTHER VARIOUS DISPUTED ISSUES WILL BE ALMOST IRRESISTIBLE. I THEREFORE THINK THAT THE CHANCES OF A CLASH INVOLVING POLISH FORCE AND OF SOVIET INTERVENTION HAVE INCREASED.

FCO PSE PASS SAVING ADDRESSEES.

PRIDHAM

[REPEATED AS REQUESTED]

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