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TEL NO 953 OF 18TH DECEMBER 1981

AND TO IMMEDIATE: WASHINGTON, BONN. MOSCOW, UKDEL NATO, PARIS,
MODUK.

POLAND - INTERNAL SITUATION.

1. WARSAW. EYE WITNESSES HAVE REPORTED A MAJOR INCIDENT BETWEEN THE POPULATION AND THE POLICE IN THE MIDDLE OF WARSAW THIS AFTERNOON (17/12). IT BEGAN IN VICTORY SQUARE WHERE A CROSS WAS PLANTED ON THE SITE WHERE WYSZYNSKI'S COFFIN HAD LAIN DURING HIS FUNERAL SERVICE. THIS CROSS BECAME THE FOCUS OF POPULAR ATTENTION. CANDLES WERE LIT AROUND IT. THE SECURITY FORCES THEN INTERVENED, PUSHED THE CROWD OUT OF THE SQUARE AND EXTINGUISHED THE CANDLES. THE CROWD REASSEMBLED IN A NEARBY STREET ON THE STEPS OF A CHURCH WHICH WAS TODAY SAID TO HAVE BECOME A SOLIDARITY INFORMATION CENTRE. AN EYE WITNESS ESTIMATES THAT BY 1630 SEVERAL THOUSAND PEOPLE WERE GATHERED ROUND THE CHURCH SINGING HYMNS AND PATRIOTIC SONGS. THE RIOT POLICE THEN ATTACKED THE CROWD WITH TEAR GAS AND TRUNCHEONS. SOME OF THE CROWD FLED INTO THE CHURCH PURSUED BY THE POLICE WHO DRAGGED THEM OUT AND TOOK THEM AWAY. NO DEAD WERE SEEN BY THE EYE WITNESS BUT THE FIGHTING WAS HEAVY AND RESULTED IN NUMBERS OF CASUALTIES. AMBULANCES WERE SUBSEQUENTLY SEEN COMING TO THE SCENE OF THE INCIDENT. HAVING DISPERSED THE CROWD OUTSIDE THE CHURCH, THE POLICE ALSO TURNED AND ATTACKED SPECTATORS.

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2. A CALLER AT THE BRITISH COUNCIL FROM SILESIA SAID THAT SEVERAL MINES WERE OCCUPIED BY MINERS WHO HAD TAKEN THEIR WIVES AND CHILDREN UNDERGROUND WITH THEM. THE MINERS WERE SAID TO POSSESS EXPLOSIVES AND HAVE THREATENED TO BLOW THEMSELVES AND THE MINES UP IN THE EVENT OF ACTION BY THE SECURITY FORCES. THE SAME CALLER SAID THAT AN UNCONFIRMED REPORT HAD SPOKEN OF SUCH AN EXPLOSION AT THE WUJEK COLLIERY. FOREIGN MINISTER CZYREK HAS SUBSEQUENTLY CONFIRMED THAT THIS COLLIERY WAS THE SCENE OF THE FIRST MOB DEATHS YESTERDAY.

3. A SOLIDARITY ACTIVIST FROM URSUS RELEASED IN ERROR FOR A FEW HOURS AFTER THE FIRST ROUND UP OF URSUS WORKERS TOLD HIS WIFE, WHO IN TURN TOLD A MASSEY FERGUSON EMPLOYEE, THAT URSUS WORKERS HAD BEEN STOOD WITH THEIR FACES AGAINST A WALL FOR SEVERAL HOURS FOR INTERROGATION. THE INTERROGATOR, WHOM THEY HAD NOT SEEN, HAD SPOKEN RUSSIAN TO THEM AND HAD ACCOMPANIED HIS INTERROGATION BY THREATS INVOLVING COCKED RIFLES AT THE BACK OF THE WORKERS' HEADS. (THERE IS CLEARLY AN ELEMENT OF EXAGGERATION IN THIS ACCOUNT). THIS INFORMANT WAS ARRESTED SEVERAL HOURS AFTER HIS ERRONEOUS RELEASE. WE HAVE ALSO HEARD OF INDUSTRIAL SABOTAGE AT HUTA WARSZAWA.

4. THE MILICJA INTEREST IN WESTERN EMBASSIES HAS INCREASED. THERE ARE NOW BARRIERS BLOCKING OFF THE PAVEMENT AT EITHER END OF THE FRONT OF OUR EMBASSY. PRESUMABLY INTENDED TO CHANNEL WOULD BE VISITORS MORE DIRECTLY TOWARDS THE MILICJA GUARD OUTSIDE. ON OF OUR DRIVERS BRINGING AN EMPTY OFFICIAL CAR INTO THE COURTYARD WAS ORDERED TO OPEN THE BOOT FOR INSPECTION BEFORE BEING ALLOWED IN. (WE ARE CONSIDERING WHAT RESPONSE TO MAKE TO THIS INCIDENT.) THIS HEIGHTENED INTEREST MAY BE CAUSED BY THE RUMOURED PRESENCE OF THE MAZOWSZE LEADER, BUJAK AT THE FRENCH EMBASSY. OTHER EVIDENCE OF INCREASED SECURITY FORCE ANXIETY AT ROADBLOCKS CAME FROM THE BA REPRESENTATIVE. HE WAS ORDERED BY A SOLDIER TO EMPTY THE CONTENTS OF A JERRYCAN IN HIS BOOT INTO HIS PETROL TANK, POLES HAVE SIMPLY HAD JERRYCANS CONFISCATED BY THE SOLDIERS.

JAMES

BT