Intelligence Information Cable

COUNTRY: POLAND/USSR

SUBJECT: SOVIET PRESSURE ON POLISH GOVERNMENT TO ACT AGAINST THE POLISH CHURCH (DOE: LATE DECEMBER 1981)

SOURCE: A FORMER POLISH GENERAL STAFF OFFICER WHO MADE THE FOLLOWING COMMENTS BASED ON HIS PAST EXPERIENCE AND CONTACTS:

1. WHILE THERE ARE NO POLISH PLANS PER SE TO ACT AGAINST THE CHURCH, VERY STRONG PRESSURE WAS EXERTED BY THE SOVIETS TO CONPEL THE POLES TO SEVERELY CURTAIL THE ACTIVITIES OF THE CATHOLIC CHURCH. SOME SOVIET MILITARY OFFICERS HAVE ARGUED THAT THE MAIN CAUSE FOR THE CURRENT POLISH SITUATION IS THE CHURCH'S INFLUENCE IN POLAND AND THE ELECTION OF A POLISH POPE. THE SOVIETS CONDEMNED THE POLISH DECISION TO ALLOW THE POPE TO VISIT POLAND IN JUNE 1979 AND DEMANDED THAT CHURCH INFLUENCE BE RADICALLY LIMITED.

2. ACTIONS SUBSEQUENTLY TAKEN BY THE POLISH SECURITY SERVICE AGAINST THE CHURCH INCLUDED RECORDING ALL (SIC) SERMONS BY PRIESTS, REPORTING INFORMATION ON CHURCH ACTIVITIES AND THE POLITICAL LEANINGS OF BISHOPS AND PRIESTS. MINISTRY OF INTERNAL AFFAIRS DAILY SITUATION REPORTS GIVEN TO TOP POLISH LEADERS INCLUDE A SECTION ON THE CHURCH.

SECRET

RELEASE IN PART
EXEMPTION: HR70-14
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2. IF IT HAS NOT BEEN DONE YET, THE CURTAILMENT OF 
CHURCH ACTIVITIES DEMANDED BY THE SOVIETS WILL BE ACCOMPLISHED IN THE 
NEAR FUTURE. WITHIN THE MILITARY COUNCIL, THE LIMITATION OF THE 
CHURCH IS THE SECOND GOAL TO BE PURSUED AS SOON AS THE RESISTANCE 
OF THE WORKERS IS BROKEN. CURTAILMENT OF CHURCH ACTIVITIES WOULD 
INCLUDE LIMITING THE FREEDOM OF PRIESTS AND BISHOPS AND OTHER 
CLERGY; CANCELLING RELIGIOUS EDUCATION IN SCHOOLS; CANCELLING THE 
CONSTRUCTION OF NEW CHURCHES AND CONFINING ALL CHURCH ACTIVITIES TO 
EXISTING CHURCHES ONLY. PRIESTS, BISHOPS, NUNS, AND OTHER CLERICS 
WHO SPEAK OUT AGAINST THE REGIME WILL BE ISOLATED AND ARRESTED. AT 
PRESENT, EFFORTS ARE BEING MADE TO ISOLATE ONLY THOSE WHO ARE 
PARTICULARLY VOCAL IN CONDEMNING THE GOVERNMENT AND SUPPORTING 
SOLIDARITY. LATER, MORE HARSH MEASURES WILL BE TAKEN. HIGH LEVEL 
SOVIET MILITARY PRESSURE ON THE POLES IN THIS REGARD INCLUDES SOME 
SUGGESTIONS FOR MEASURES AGAINST THE CLERGY. THESE HAVE INCLUDED 
GETTING PRIESTS DRUNK, PATERNITY SUITS AGAINST PRIESTS, AND A 
SHAM CAMPAIGN TO COMPROMISE THE CLERGY. A TYPICAL EXAMPLE OF THE 
SOVIET ATTITUDE TOWARDS THE POLISH CHURCH OCCURRED LAST SUMMER, WHEN 
WARSAW PACT COMMANDER-IN-CHIEF V. I. KULIKOV VISITED POLAND. HE 
ASKED TO SEE A FILM OF THE POPE'S VISIT, THROUGHOUT WHICH HE RAILED
ABOUT HOW UNTHINKABLE IT WAS THAT A CHURCH LEADER COULD GET SUCH A RECEPTION IN A COMMunist COUNTRY.


4. THROUGHOUT THE PAST YEAR, THERE HAVE BEEN VERY STRONG PRESSURES ON JARUJELSKI TO LIMIT THE INFLUENCE OF THE CHURCH IN POLISH SOCIETY. THE POLES HAVE ARGUED THAT THE TIME IS NOT RIGHT TO DO SO AND AT PRESENT CONDITIONS ARE NOT MADE FOR IT. THEY TRIED TO SHOW THE POSITIVE ASPECTS OF CHURCH INFLUENCE, FOR EXAMPLE.
THE CHURCH AND CARDINAL STEFAN WYSZYNSKI, NOW DECEASED, AS BEING A
FORCE FOR MODERATION AND FOR CALM. THE SOVIETS, HOWEVER, DISREGARD
THIS LINE OF REASONING.