

CIACO NID 81 [REDACTED]

August 13, 1981

POLAND: Solidarity Appeals for Calm

Tensions in Poland will once again recede if Solidarity's leadership can win compliance from rank-and-file members to its appeals yesterday for an end to hunger marches. [REDACTED]

The union leadership also has asked the union Committee for the Defense of Political Prisoners to postpone its march on Warsaw, which is scheduled to begin on Monday. Solidarity's leaders, in a demonstration of their concern for economic conditions, have asked union members, particularly miners, to work on eight work-free Saturdays before the end of the year. [REDACTED]

Securing rank-and-file cooperation will be difficult, but the leadership probably would not have issued the appeals if it thought they would be rejected. It will have to convince workers that Solidarity has not simply caved in to the recent tough talk from the party and government. [REDACTED]

The leaders may argue that the regime is prepared to consult more closely on economic reform issues, particularly the issue of price reforms. In addition, the union will have to be more effective in convincing a skeptical population that the government is not withholding foodstuffs or other consumer goods. [REDACTED]

The leadership has, however, maintained its militant stance on other issues. It threatened to call all printers out on strike for two days next week unless the government stops its propaganda attack on the union. Moreover, it has denied that it was the cause of recent strikes and that it was changing itself into a political party. [REDACTED]

The union's conciliatory statements should put party chief Kania in a good position for talks to be held soon with Brezhnev. [REDACTED]

Kania and Prime Minister Jaruzelski will travel to the Crimea this weekend. Kania will argue that the recent tough party and government stands demonstrate their willingness to oppose Solidarity more forcefully. [REDACTED]

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281
302

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Soviet Propaganda

Soviet commentary on Poland since early August has contained no signal that Moscow favors a massive crack-down by the Polish authorities. Soviet media have not attacked the Polish party, but have singled out "extremists" in Solidarity. Recurrent themes include criticism of the union's failure to support the government's economic program, endorsement of the government's effort to grapple with the food situation, and allegations that most Polish workers are disenchanted with the confrontation tactics of Solidarity leaders. [REDACTED]

By withholding criticism of either Kania or Solidarity as an entity, Moscow may intend to avoid provoking a backlash from the Poles while waiting for rising economic difficulties to discredit both the demands of the union and the regime's waffling tactics. The Soviets probably also hope to appear to be on top of developments without tying themselves prematurely to a decisive course of action. [REDACTED]