

CIACO NID 81 [REDACTED]

October 28, 1981

POLAND: Solidarity's Strike

The union's decision to exempt certain vital sectors--including radio and television--from the general strike to be held today seems intended to deflect the regime's criticism that it is "irresponsible." [REDACTED]

The union ignored regime pressure and went ahead with its plans for the nationwide work stoppage to demonstrate its strength and discipline. The Solidarity leaders probably have worked hard to bring some of the rebellious local chapters into line, but at least one chapter indicated that it would extend the general strike beyond the one-hour limit, which the union set in order to minimize economic damage. Both the government and union probably hope that the strike will help dampen labor unrest and allow them to get on with negotiations that have been largely held in abeyance. [REDACTED]

The party Central Committee meeting today--which is scheduled to begin several hours after the strike is slated to end--may have as its first order of business an assessment of the strike's implications for party policy. Those favoring continuing dialogue with Solidarity may argue that the strike has shown the power of the unions. [REDACTED]

Some party hardliners, on the other hand, may be alarmed by the strike's demonstration of the union's effectiveness and press for even tougher measures by the party toward the union. Premier Jaruzelski's show of firmness and vigor over the last week should put him in a good position to resist pressure from the hardliners. Personnel changes, decided at the Politburo's session on Monday, also will be acted upon today. [REDACTED]

The initial deployment of special military groups reportedly is to be completed today. [REDACTED]

[REDACTED] yesterday that these groups are instructed to focus on arbitrating differences between citizens and the local authorities, and not to act as "intimidators." They apparently are empowered to request transportation support from the military districts, suggesting that they will help expedite the movement of goods. [REDACTED]

--continued

Approved for Release
Date AUG 1999

335
~~356~~

CIACO NID 81 [REDACTED]

October 28, 1981

The teams also are expected to defend regime policy and to blame economic problems on Solidarity, but they are not likely to make good propagandists. The regime has already been touting the effectiveness of the teams, but it may be creating a new problem for itself by raising consumer expectations. [REDACTED]

The troops may be useful in ensuring movement of goods throughout the country, helping reduce pilferage, and enforcing distribution priorities, but they probably will only marginally increase the amount of agricultural supplies available to the cities. Soldiers could stand guard at agricultural collection points to ensure that farmers are treated fairly and that losses are kept to a minimum. They cannot have any dramatic impact, however, on the amount of food collected unless the government takes the unlikely action of forcing farmers into turning their production over to the state. [REDACTED]

The government relies on contracts with farmers rather than on compulsory procurement. Farmers have been reluctant to sign contracts--those for meat deliveries in October-December amount to only one-half the level during the same period of last year--because the government has not supplied the coal and other inputs linked to agricultural sales. Many farmers prefer to sell for higher prices in the private and black markets or to barter directly with consumers. [REDACTED]