

CIACO NID 81 [REDACTED]

October 31, 1981

POLAND: Political Maneuvering

Party leader Jaruzelski yesterday chose a moderate course by not confronting Solidarity with a legal ban on strikes. [REDACTED]

He called on the union to back a parliamentary resolution--which lacks the force of law--demanding an immediate end to strike activity. If that resolution is ignored, he threatened to seek parliamentary authorization for the government to use "extraordinary means of action," something that could point to a legal strike ban or a "state of emergency." [REDACTED]

Jaruzelski, in effect, has temporized on the issue, trying to deflect hardline pressure for an immediate strike ban while forcing Solidarity to control wildcat strikes. At the same time, he has reduced his maneuvering room by publicly committing himself to a tougher course of action if labor unrest continues. [REDACTED]

The regime threat to take away Solidarity's strike weapon could hinder the union leadership's attempts to end continuing wildcat strikes. The union announced Thursday that it will consider disciplinary action to enforce its own ban on strikes. Union militants can argue, however, that such action by the leadership would threaten its credibility with the rank and file by creating the impression it is giving in to government threats. [REDACTED]

Ministerial changes announced by Jaruzelski are partly intended to invigorate management of the economy. Three deputy premiers were given broad powers to oversee economic and trade union affairs. [REDACTED]

Although the changes are also designed to give the appearance of broadening the base of government support, the appointees are not likely to enjoy the confidence of Solidarity and the Church. They include the head of the Communist-allied Democratic Party and an activist from a regime-sponsored Catholic organization. [REDACTED]

Opposition from party hardliners may have prevented Jaruzelski from making more significant changes. He might try instead to bring representatives of Solidarity and the Catholic Church into his proposed new mechanisms for government consultation with representatives of society. Parliament could act on such proposals at its final session today. [REDACTED]

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