

CIACO NID 81 [REDACTED]

December 09, 1981

POLAND: Regime's Media Campaign

The regime has mounted the most coordinated and vitriolic media campaign ever against Solidarity--one which will raise tensions and prevent serious substantive negotiations until after the new year. [REDACTED]

The government-controlled media are using tape recordings of a Solidarity meeting last week to portray union leaders as "madmen" who place their "sick ambitions" above the fate of Poland. The tapes also detail alleged preparations by local union chapters for physical confrontations. The army daily publication, going beyond its usual hardline stance, has even called Walesa a "big liar and provocateur." [REDACTED]

Several purposes may be behind the government's campaign. It is probably trying to demonstrate to party and government loyalists that it is not impotent in the face of union pressure, and it hopes to buoy flagging morale and encourage greater opposition to the union in local disputes. The government also appears to believe that Solidarity is losing some popularity and probably hopes the campaign will further discredit the union. [REDACTED]

In addition, the regime may be covering up its unwillingness to make concessions in negotiations with the union, trying to blame Solidarity for the lack of progress. Some in the regime may also believe that the campaign will force a split between union moderates and union militants or provide justification for a government request for certain emergency powers. [REDACTED]

How the regime intends to turn this media campaign into action will become clearer at next week's meeting of parliament. The session is slated to deal with numerous controversial issues vital to union interests, including a new trade union law, a law restricting strikes, and economic reform legislation. [REDACTED]

The regime's hardened media posture should give impetus to union radicals when the Solidarity National Commission convenes a two-day session on Friday. The

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union is unlikely, however, to respond with specific actions until the regime reveals its intentions at the meeting of parliament. [REDACTED]

The renewed tensions have prompted Archbishop Glemp to assume the role of arbitrator more directly than at any time since he became head of the Church last summer. A Church spokesman revealed yesterday that Glemp sent letters on Monday to Solidarity, the government, and members of parliament calling for renewed dialogue and warning that any law banning strikes and restricting freedoms would have "tragic consequences." Glemp's actions--which put him directly at odds with the regime--could prompt the regime to be moderate in its requests for legislation from the parliament. [REDACTED]