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EASTERN EUROPE - POLAND: Economic Assistance

Several East European countries have increased shipments of food and consumer goods to Poland since the imposition of martial law.

Czechoslovakia reportedly agreed to provide food to Poland during Deputy Premier Madej's visit to Prague last month.

_____ Hungary diverted meat to Poland that originally was intended for export to the West. Late last month, CEMA representatives agreed at a conference to maintain some additional shipments through June.

The countries also plan to assist the Poles in other ways. There are reports, for example, that Prague has given Warsaw a new soft currency loan. The East European regimes suspect they will have to accept below-plan Polish deliveries while fulfilling their own commitments.

The assistance is aggravating economic problems in Eastern Europe. In some countries, it also is intensifying anti-Polish sentiments.

Comment: Czechoslovakia, East Germany, and Hungary probably have each shipped goods worth at least \$50 million to \$100 million since martial law was declared. Bulgaria evidently has sent less, and Romania has provided almost no aid.

An accurate total accounting may never be possible. The East European regimes do not announce all deliveries, and there is considerable confusion about whether the shipments represent grants, above-plan sales, or advance deliveries of previously contracted goods.

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17 February 1982

Approved for Release
Date AUG 1999

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