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East Europe Report

POLITICAL, SOCIOLOGICAL AND MILITARY AFFAIRS

(FOUO 4/82)



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POLAND

ANALYSIS OF GENERAL JARUZELSKI BY 'PARIS MATCH' NOTED

Paris PARIS MATCH in French 25 Dec 81 p 23

[Article by Marc Ullmann: "On Whose Team is Jaruzelski Playing?"]

[Text] Who is deceiving whom in Poland? Is the Party deceiving the people, advancing in military disguise? Or is the Army deceiving the Party, by establishing a new regime? The future of the country depends on the answer to this question. If the Army is acting on behalf of a regime which has been discredited, it will lose first of all its reputation and then its honor, for sooner or later the anger of the people will turn upon it. If, on the contrary, the Poles decide that the 13 December coup d'etat was one of nationalist inspiration, it is probable that the Catholic Church will in the end reach an understanding with the Army.

General Jaruzelski is doing everything possible to ensure acceptance of the idea that the "military council for national recovery" is entirely independent of the Communist Party and that its roots go deep in Polish history. The stage has been set with particular care. When the General appears on television, he is in uniform, and the only symbol visible on the screen is the traditional eagle, i.e., the emblem of Poland. Before and after his speech, a military band plays the Polish national anthem, the Mazurka by Dabrowski, which no one could confuse with the International. And the television announcers are dressed as soldiers.

The same is true where the content of the proclamations is concerned. The speech given by the General on 13 December lasted 25 minutes, and contained not the slightest reference to the Communist Party. In his dry voice, the new master of Poland stressed the fact that the "military commissars" would be appointed on all levels of the State apparatus and the administration, as well as to key posts in the economy. "They will have the right," the General specified, "to dismiss any individual who does his work badly." That is all very nice, but the Poles instinctively mistrust it.

It must be said that the General's career does not advance his cause. His parents were members of the gentry, and during the war they were deported to the USSR with other family members. In 1945, they did not choose to return, but their 22 year old son Wojciech, for his part, did. He rejected the family nationalism, enlisted in the Polish Army established on Soviet territory, and participated in the repression of the Polish anticommunist underground fighters. At 37, he found himself head of the political department of the Army, and then, using that as a

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springboard, made a parallel advance in the military and communist hierarchies. All of this appears to have made him the perfect apparatchik.

However, while he was Minister of Defense in 1970, General Jaruzelski opposed the use of force against the first strikers in Gdansk. Ten years later, his attitude had not changed, and he went so far as to order Polish soldiers not to fire on Polish workers. Lech Walesa regards him as "one of the lesser evils." However, he has real authority in the Army, and this is an important point for the Poles, because two-thirds of the population (see poll on p 36) believe that the Army represents the nation.

Those who know the General state that he is perfectly well aware of the Polish reality and that his purpose is to govern with the blessing of the Church. This is doubtless true. The decree establishing martial law, if indeed it prohibits meetings, marches and even performances, makes an exception for religious ceremonies and public worship. This represents implicit recognition of the fact that the Church plays a more important role in Poland than in any other country. That role is not of recent date. Since the baptism of Poland in 966, the Church has exercised official functions which are deep-rooted in the life of the nation and the state. Most important, from 1772 to 1917, Poland was divided and occupied by foreigners who were Protestants on the one hand, and Orthodox, on the other. It was the Church which first of all encouraged armed struggle against these foreigners, and then became the embodiment of passive resistance, keeping alive the very idea of an independent Poland. Since 1939, the heroic tradition has been taken up again: the Polish soul took refuge in the Church and did not emerge again until 1980, to pursue the revolution.

This is why the reaction of the Pope, Sunday noon, can be termed historic. This reaction, despite its caution, constitutes an appeal for compromise. "Polish blood," John Paul II said, "must not be spilled. There was already too much blood shed during World War II. Everything should be done to ensure the peaceful building of the peaceful future." The Primate of Poland, Monsignor Jozef Glemp, welcomed the message wholeheartedly. He made a pilgrimage to the famous Black Virgin of Czestochowa, and then, Sunday evening, he delivered a homily which will henceforth serve as an unofficial Catholic Charter. It was skillfully organized. Initially, this clergyman echoed the people's anger and condemned the authorities "who have ceased to be the authorities of dialogue." In a second phase, he urged moderation and condemned revolt. "There is nothing more valuable than human life. I beg you on my knees, brother workers, not to sacrifice your lives." Finally, in a third section, he issued a discreet appeal for national unity. "Let us all pray for Poland, and that it will be possible to build a peaceful future together." The least one could say is that these addresses do not constitute an appeal for violent resistance. The authorities are very clear on this point: they are having the homily read and reread on television and the radio.

This whole week, the fate of Poland has been hanging. On the one hand, the trade union networks are reorganizing secretly, and what General Jaruzelski calls the "adventurers" are seeking to launch strikes. On the other hand, Monseignor Glemp is feeling the national pulse and trying to establish some idea of the reality of the military regime. If Jaruzelski is but a communist disguised as a soldier, if

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he is appointing other communists disguised as soldiers to key posts, it would not be worthwhile to tarnish the age-old prestige of the Church by compromising it in negotiations which will serve as an alibi for dictatorship, a kind of collaboration with a regime which would keep its prisons full of Christians on the pretext that they are trade unionists. If, on the contrary, the 13 December coup d'etat was but a maneuver to remind the Poles that they should not dream of free elections under the nose of the Soviet regime, it will doubtless be possible to achieve a sort of national unity in which, under the nominal authority of the Army, the Church, reasonable elements in the Party and the moderate elements in Solidarity will have their say.

Such a compromise would be acceptable to the USSR, which wants neither to be flouted nor to be forced to intervene with its own troops. It would be acceptable to the West which, as is commonly noted, does not want to "get involved." It would even be acceptable to the Poles, who no longer know what to do with their zlotych in an economy which has reached the ultimate in confusion and in which the shops are empty.

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POLAND

SOLIDARITY MEMBERS KOWALEWSKI, BLUMSZTAJN INTERVIEWED

Paris LE NOUVEL OBSERVATEUR in French 9-15 Jan 82 p 45

[Interview with Seweryn Blumsztajn and Zbigniew Kowalewski, members of Solidarity, by Pierre Blanchet and Henri Frydlender; date and place not specified]

[Text] In this interview, Seweryn Blumsztajn and Zbigniew Kowalewski, members of Solidarity, explain why Jaruzelski's coup d'etat caught their trade union by surprise. Blumsztajn is a former member of the KOR [Committee for the Defense of the Worker] and editor of the Solidarity Press Agency. Kowalewski is a member of Solidarity's executive presidium for the Lodz region.

[Question] What is your opinion nearly 1 month after the coup d'etat in Poland? Has the coup failed? Has it succeeded?

S. Blumsztajn: The putsch surprised Solidarity and the entire Polish society. Solidarity was prepared for confrontation but did not think it would occur in that form. We were expecting the Sejm to act on the government's special powers bill. We were preparing for a general strike. Following the events in Bydgoszcz last March, we had also prepared ourselves for a general strike. That strike was never called, but we did feel enormously powerful at the time. The government no doubt realized then that such a situation must not be allowed to recur. How do I evaluate the coup? It can be said that its first phase, the military phase, was successful. I am convinced, however, that even though people in Poland are returning to factories and other places of employment, nobody is actually working. This is what we call passive resistance, even if the government appears to have succeeded in stifling all highly conspicuous forms of resistance. Furthermore, Jaruzelski has nothing to offer the Polish people, either politically or, above all, economically.

[Question] Do you think that part of the Polish people, exhausted by the tension and difficulties, may have welcomed the coup d'etat with a sense of relief?

Z. Kowalewski: I don't think so. If the dictatorship has a base, it consists of those individuals connected with the party apparatus and the governmental administrative system, directly or indirectly. I believe this government will be the most isolated of all the governments that have followed one another in Poland. Especially if the new team is unable to solve food and other supply problems.

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[Question] In the West, particularly in the German press, we frequently read that Solidarity had gone too far....

Z. Kowalewski: Stated in that manner, your question is abstract. You have to know what Polish society was like. We had never experienced such a crisis. Nor had we ever seen such a paralysis of the governmental administrative system. The government was incapable of doing anything at all to solve food supply problems. Because of this, Solidarity members were naturally induced to ask more of the government.

S. Blumsztajn: The authorities resisted. Last November, it was obvious to us that the government was prepared to keep society in a crisis situation provided its, the government's, interests were protected. That is how Solidarity got the idea of a referendum on the government's methods.

[Question] But you know full well that such a referendum is impossible in an East European country.

S. Blumsztajn: Solidarity had no intention of subduing the government. We were even talking about self-limitation of our movement. Our idea was to monitor government activity. It was the idea that pressure from the civil society would enable the government to function more effectively. Yet, after 6 months had passed, it became evident that the government was incapable of functioning. Solidarity was thus forced by circumstances to broaden its demands. Let me point out here that finally Solidarity was no longer controlling, far from it, all of the strikes. But I would especially like to underscore the danger in the argument that we had gone too far. Saying that Poles were asking for too much is actually tantamount to asking Poland to renounce freedom and independence in the interest of peace in Europe. Such a request is morally very dubious. No one has the right to ask a people to abdicate its independence and freedom. The Yalta agreements were signed by Western governments! Not by Poland.

[Question] What do you think of the strategy and prudence of the Catholic Church?

Z. Kowalewski: The Church has appealed for calm. It has asked Poles to avoid bloodshed, and we concur. The national strike committee's appeal was similarly oriented. In most cases, workers left their places of employment to avoid bloodshed. Having said that, let me add that the Church is not Solidarity.

[Question] How do you interpret the military junta's chauvinistic and anti-Semitic propaganda? Does it have a chance of succeeding in Poland?

S. Blumsztajn: Solidarity had adopted the symbols of the Polish nation, such as the flag and patriotic songs. The new government is trying to do the same thing, but in reverse fashion by accentuating what is most reactionary and most chauvinistic. It's a good thing for Poles, however, that this government is proving to be anti-Semitic. That effort will backfire. The anti-Semitic ploy was attempted in 1968. It failed.

[Question] What do you expect from the West?

S. Blumsztajn: Moral support, such as that given us by France, for example. But also economic pressure which can be most effective. All economic aid should be suspended,

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except for food assistance. And food assistance must itself be supervised and addressed particularly to the Church. Lastly, serious thought must be given to what can be done in the informational field. The worst thing is silence. Remember Cambodia where everything happened in silence.

[Question] All things considered, Solidarity was taken unaware. Did you make mistakes in your estimate of the situation?

Z. Kowalewski: We thought that things would move more slowly. We were not expecting a sudden savage coup. We do not have the army's technical resources. A trade union is not an army.

S. Blumsztajn: We were perhaps too self-confident. We perhaps believed that because the whole population sided with us nothing could happen to us. And then it did happen. A coup which, by its magnitude and number of arrests, has been unmatched in Poland for the past 35 years. Lastly, I must add that everything has its other side. Solidarity is a democratic movement, a movement obsessed with democracy and transparency. We had no stand-by leadership or secret army.

[Question] How do you picture the situation in Poland 6 months hence?

S. Blumsztajn: That will depend on the West's reactions. As for everything else, Solidarity will rebuild itself. We did it before and after 1970 and 1971. There may be some terrorism. That would be a shame. But hatred has now established itself in Poland. We thought that a general agreement with the government authorities was possible. There may possibly never be such agreement again.

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POLAND

POLISH OFFICIALS DISCUSS CRISIS WITH UK VISITORS

PM161703 London THE SUNDAY TIMES in English 15 Nov 81 p 9

[Hugo Young dispatch: "Empty Shelves Tarnish Polish Reforms"]

[Excerpt] Warsaw--With extraordinary candour, a group of Polish politicians spoke last week to a group of British visitors to Warsaw and frankly described the worsening crisis in their country. Their admissions of failure were remarkable even by Western standards, let alone coming out of the sealed world of the Soviet empire.

Some of them were positively heretical. "If there were free elections in Poland next year," said one senior communist, "the Polish Communist Party would finish in a quite insignificant position."

The meeting encompassed British politicians, journalists and academics, with senior Polish participants who included ministers from General Jaruzelski's government, hard "independents" and allies of and spokesmen for Solidarity, the free trade union that now covers 90 percent of the workforce.

Conversations took place on condition that the Poles should not be publicly named. But they revealed the two most striking truths about Poland today: First, almost total collapse with a certain honesty and in open disagreement. The seriousness and intellectual integrity of the debate made current events inside the British Labour Party seem like the posturing of trivial opportunists.

There was no disagreement or pretence, for example, about the disastrous state of the Polish economy. Any propaganda of success has long ago been overtaken by food queues, falling production, unmotivated workers and a colossal international debt.

What is going on now is an agonising argument about how to square Solidarity's massive dissent with the Leninist requirement that the Communist Party--in Poland a corrupt and dwindling body--should retain the "leading role" in the state.

The most authoritative party leaders offered us a sombre tour of their minds. The dismantling of authority has induced in them a paralysing anxiety, and they believe the leaders of Solidarity do not realise what fire the union is playing with. They claimed to want to find "lasting room" for an independent trade union, but Solidarity, they said, was permeated with "extremist adventurers," who did not understand the cardinal proposition that Poland "can only exist as a socialist state."

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"Our neighbours are watching us closely," said the most senior man at the table. "At first, events here were regarded with sympathy. But empty shelves don't make us admirable." The Hungarian leader, Janos Kadar, had changed his mind, and was now letting it be known that the Polish experiment would fail. The Russians, having reluctantly approved the reforms thus far, were getting frightened by "anti-Soviet tendencies: and "by the evidence that the party is losing its influence."

"Are we threatened by Soviet intervention?" he went on. "As far as we know, the Soviet Union would hate it. But it will come if bloodshed occurs in Polish cities: If, in other words, the Hungarian events of 1956 are repeated in Poland." If Poland were destabilized, what would be the effects in the world? No Polish city must become the Sarajevo of the 1980's."

Solidarity defended a different order of priorities. Its leaders show a cavalier indifference to the international scene. When it was suggested that a breakdown in Poland could end all lingering hopes of detente, the reply was: "Too bad." For the suffering people of Poland, they contend, this is the only chance there will ever be of breaking with a monolithic political system and a failed economy.

When, for example, the Solidarity tactic of "active strikes" (in British parlance, factory occupations and work-ins) was scathingly attacked by party men as revealing "total unreality," the Solidarity response was instant: "If active strikes frighten the authorities, then good--perhaps it will make them sit up." It was peculiarly Polish that the weightiest of the party men should have had the grace to smile in acquiescence.

But Solidarity is not entirely uncalculating. The orthodox strike weapon it now regards as useless, because its original purpose--to expose the lack of support for the government--is fulfilled, and anyway the economic situation makes strikes counter-productive. Lech Walesa is therefore touring the country trying to get the people back to work.

This illustrates, however, how Solidarity itself is sucked into the crisis of authority. The workers aren't all going back. The union leadership reckons it has just one remnant of moral capital left unspent, with which to impose its will on the masses. It has decided to hold this in reserve, until later in the winter.

The party men, excluding the Stalinists, did not deny that changes had been necessary. But they kept accusing Solidarity of wishing to take over the government, to which the moderate union leadership had a logical and evidently sincere report. How, they asked, can 10 million people be turned into a political party? And if they were, what would happen to the union and to the "opposition" role which its idealistic founders originally saw as necessary?

"We declare ourselves openly as a special movement," said the Solidarity man. "We are trying to get new institutions." Here the debate reached a semblance of agreement. The party itself wants new institutions but how far and how fast should these institutions develop? And what are they calculated to destroy?

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Apart from its demands for reform of the media and the judiciary, and its proposals for Yugoslav-style workers' cooperatives in the factories, Solidarity specified an economic and social council to watch over economic decisions. This weekend urgent efforts are being made to put something like this together. Assuming it is enough to stave off the uprising that some sober Poles fear within a matter of weeks, there are broadly two directions, each fraught with considerable danger, which are envisaged for the council.

One is that it splits and enfeebles Solidarity. The union knows it is taking a great risk in entering even this far into the foothills of government. Responsibility without power could destroy its leaders. Pessimistic though this is, it is probably more realistic than Solidarity's counter-claim: that the Communist Party itself will split and founder.

A second possibility is equally radical. Some see the council as an embryonic second chamber of parliament--rather like a reformed House of Lords, with representatives of the different estates of the realm nominated to talk, but not to decide. As long as the communists ran the main house, it was argued, a new one in this form could secure Soviet approval while beginning to re-create the Polish people's belief that they had a system could they believe in.

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