

WOODROW WILSON INTERNATIONAL CENTER FOR SCHOLARS



Woodrow Wilson  
International Center  
for Scholars

Lee H. Hamilton,  
Director

BOARD OF  
TRUSTEES:

Joseph A. Cari, Jr.,  
Chairman  
Steven Alan Bennett,  
Vice Chairman

PUBLIC MEMBERS

The Secretary of State  
Colin Powell;  
The Librarian of  
Congress  
James H. Billington;  
The Archivist of the  
United States  
John W. Carlin;  
The Chairman of the  
National Endowment  
for the Humanities  
Bruce Cole;  
The Secretary of the  
Smithsonian Institution  
Lawrence M. Small;  
The Secretary of  
Education  
Roderick R. Paige;  
The Secretary of Health  
& Human Services  
Tommy G. Thompson;

PRIVATE MEMBERS

Carol Cartwright,  
John H. Foster,  
Jean L. Hennessey,  
Daniel L. Lamaute,  
Doris O. Mausui,  
Thomas R. Reedy,  
Nancy M. Zirkin

**“On the Decision to Introduce Martial Law  
in Poland In 1981”  
Two Historians Report to  
the Commission on Constitutional Oversight  
of the *Sejm* of the Republic of Poland**

**ANDRZEJ PACZKOWSKI  
And  
ANDRZEJ WERBLAN**

**Working Paper No. 21**

**Washington, D.C.**

**November 1997**

**COLD WAR INTERNATIONAL HISTORY PROJECT**



Christian Ostermann,  
Director

ADVISORY  
COMMITTEE:

William Taubman  
(Amherst College)  
Chairman

Michael Beschloss  
(Historian, Author)

James H. Billington  
(Librarian of Congress)

Warren I. Cohen  
(University of Maryland-  
Baltimore)

John Lewis Gaddis  
(Yale University)

James Hershberg  
(The George Washington  
University)

Samuel F. Wells, Jr.  
(Woodrow Wilson  
Center)

Sharon Wolchik  
(The George Washington  
University)

**THE COLD WAR INTERNATIONAL HISTORY PROJECT  
WORKING PAPER SERIES**

**CHRISTIAN F. OSTERMANN, Series Editor**

**This paper is one of a series of Working Papers published by the Cold War International History Project of the Woodrow Wilson International Center for Scholars in Washington, D.C. Established in 1991 by a grant from the John D. and Catherine T. MacArthur Foundation, the Cold War International History Project (CWIHP) disseminates new information and perspectives on the history of the Cold War as it emerges from previously inaccessible sources on “the other side” of the post-World War II superpower rivalry. The project supports the full and prompt release of historical materials by governments on all sides of the Cold War, and seeks to accelerate the process of integrating new sources, materials and perspectives from the former “Communist bloc” with the historiography of the Cold War which has been written over the past few decades largely by Western scholars reliant on Western archival sources. It also seeks to transcend barriers of language, geography, and regional specialization to create new links among scholars interested in Cold War history. Among the activities undertaken by the project to promote this aim are a periodic *BULLETIN* to disseminate new findings, views, and activities pertaining to Cold War history; a fellowship program for young historians from the former Communist bloc to conduct archival research and study Cold War history in the United States; international scholarly meetings, conferences, and seminars; and publications.**

**The *CWIHP Working Paper Series* is designed to provide a speedy publications outlet for historians associated with the project who have gained access to newly-available archives and sources and would like to share their results. We especially welcome submissions by junior scholars from the former Communist bloc who have done research in their countries’ archives and are looking to introduce their findings to a Western audience. As a non-partisan institute of scholarly study, the Woodrow Wilson Center takes no position on the historical interpretations and opinions offered by the authors.**

**Those interested in receiving copies of the *Cold War International History Project Bulletin* or any of the Working Papers should contact:**

**Cold War International History Project  
Woodrow Wilson International Center for Scholars  
One Woodrow Wilson Plaza  
1300 Pennsylvania Ave, NW  
Washington, DC 20523**

**Telephone: (202) 691-4110  
Fax: (202) 691-4001  
Email: COLDWAR1@wwic.si.edu**

**CWIHP Web Page: <http://cwihip.si.edu>**

**COLD WAR INTERNATIONAL HISTORY PROJECT WORKING PAPERS SERIES**  
**Christian F. Ostermann, Series Editor**

- #1 Chen Jian, “The Sino-Soviet Alliance and China’s Entry into the Korean War”
- #2 P.J. Simmons, “Archival Research on the Cold War Era: A Report from Budapest, Prague and Warsaw”
- #3 James Richter, “Reexamining Soviet Policy Towards Germany during the Beria Interregnum”
- #4 Vladislav M. Zubok, “Soviet Intelligence and the Cold War: The ‘Small’ Committee of Information, 1952-53”
- #5 Hope M. Harrison, “Ulbricht and the Concrete ‘Rose’: New Archival Evidence on the Dynamics of Soviet-East German Relations and the Berlin Crisis, 1958-61”
- #6 Vladislav M. Zubok, “Khrushchev and the Berlin Crisis (1958-62)”
- #7 Mark Bradley and Robert K. Brigham, “Vietnamese Archives and Scholarship on the Cold War Period: Two Reports”
- #8 Kathryn Weathersby, “Soviet Aims in Korea and the Origins of the Korean War, 1945-50: New Evidence From Russian Archives”
- #9 Scott D. Parrish and Mikhail M. Narinsky, “New Evidence on the Soviet Rejection of the Marshall Plan, 1947: Two Reports”
- #10 Norman M. Naimark, “‘To Know Everything and To Report Everything Worth Knowing’: Building the East German Police State, 1945-49”
- #11 Christian F. Ostermann, “The United States, the East German Uprising of 1953, and the Limits of Rollback”
- #12 Brian Murray, “Stalin, the Cold War, and the Division of China: A Multi-Archival Mystery”
- #13 Vladimir O. Pechatnov, “The Big Three After World War II: New Documents on Soviet Thinking about Post-War Relations with the United States and Great Britain”
- #14 Ruud van Dijk, “The 1952 Stalin Note Debate: Myth or Missed Opportunity for German Unification?”
- #15 Natalia I. Yegorova, “The ‘Iran Crisis’ of 1945-46: A View from the Russian Archives”
- #16 Csaba Bekes, “The 1956 Hungarian Revolution and World Politics”
- #17 Leszek W. Gluchowski, “The Soviet-Polish Confrontation of October 1956: The Situation in the Polish Internal Security Corps”
- #18 Qiang Zhai, “Beijing and the Vietnam Peace Talks, 1965-68: New Evidence from Chinese Sources”
- #19 Matthew Evangelista, “‘Why Keep Such an Army?’” Khrushchev’s Troop Reductions”
- #20 Patricia K. Grimsted, “The Russian Archives Seven Years After: ‘Purveyors of Sensations’ or ‘Shadows Cast to the Past’?”
- #21 Andrzej Paczkowski and Andrzej Werblan, “‘On the Decision to Introduce Martial Law in Poland in 1981’ Two Historians Report to the Commission on Constitutional Oversight of the *SEJM* of the Republic of Poland”

- #22 Odd Arne Westad, Chen Jian, Stein Tonnesson, Nguyen Vu Tung, and James G. Hershberg, “77 Conversations Between Chinese and Foreign Leaders on the Wars in Indochina, 1964-77”**
- #23 Vojtech Mastny, “The Soviet Non-Invasion of Poland in 1980-81 and the End of the Cold War”**
- #24 John P. C. Matthews, “Majales: The Abortive Student Revolt in Czechoslovakia in 1956”**
- #25 Stephen J. Morris, “The Soviet-Chinese-Vietnamese Triangle in the 1970’s: The View from Moscow”**
- #26 Vladimir O. Pechatnov, translated by Vladimir Zubok, “‘The Allies are Pressing on You to Break Your Will...’ Foreign Policy Correspondence between Stalin and Molotov and Other Politburo Members, September 1945-December 1946”**
- #27 James G. Hershberg, with the assistance of L.W. Gluchowski, “Who Murdered ‘Marigold’? New Evidence on the Mysterious Failure of Poland’s Secret Initiative to Start U.S.-North Vietnamese Peace Talks, 1966”**
- #28 Laszlo G. Borhi, “The Merchants of the Kremlin—The Economic Roots of Soviet Expansion in Hungary”**
- #29 Rainer Karlsch and Zbynek Zeman, “The End of the Soviet Uranium Gap: The Soviet Uranium Agreements with Czechoslovakia and East Germany (1945/1953)”**
- #30 David Wolff, “‘One Finger’s Worth of Historical Events’: New Russian and Chinese Evidence on the Sino-Soviet Alliance and Split, 1948-1959”**
- #31 Eduard Mark, “Revolution By Degrees: Stalin’s National-Front Strategy For Europe, 1941-1947”**
- #32 Douglas Selvage, “The Warsaw Pact and Nuclear Nonproliferation, 1963-1965”**
- #33 Ethan Pollock, “Conversations with Stalin on Questions of Political Economy”**
- #34 Yang Kuisong, “Changes in Mao Zedong’s Attitude towards the Indochina War, 1949-1973”**
- #35 Vojtech Mastny, “NATO in the Beholder’s Eye: Soviet Perceptions and Policies, 1949-1956”**
- #36 Paul Wingrove, “Mao’s Conversations with the Soviet Ambassador, 1953-55”**
- #37 Vladimir Tismăneanu, “Gheorghiu-Dej and the Romanian Workers’ Party: From de-Sovietization to the Emergence of National Communism”**
- #38 János Rainer, “The New Course in Hungary in 1953”**
- #39 Kathryn Weathersby, “‘Should We Fear This?’ Stalin and the Danger of War with America”**
- #40 Vasiliy Mitrokhin, “The KGB in Afghanistan” (English Edition)**

#### **Special Working Papers Series**

- #1 Mark Kramer, “Soviet Deliberations during the Polish Crisis, 1980-1981”**

## INTRODUCTION

by

**Leo Gluchowski**

“The declaration of ‘Martial Law,’” wrote Marian Zenkiewicz, Chair of the Oversight Commission<sup>1</sup> at the time it reported its findings to Parliament in 1986, “next to June 1956 in Poznan and December 1970 on the Baltic coast, was one of the most dramatic events in the postwar history of Poland.”<sup>2</sup> The internal crisis in Poland between 1980-82, which saw the rise and legal registration of “Solidarity,” the first independent, self-governing trade union in the former Soviet bloc, also had an international dimension that had a profound impact on the final outcome of the Cold War in Europe.

On the tenth anniversary of the introduction of Martial Law in Poland, on 5 December 1991, fifty-one deputies representing the Parliamentary Club of the Confederation for an Independent Poland motioned to “summon for constitutional oversight before the State Tribunal and for criminal responsibility” those persons connected with the introduction and the implementation of Martial Law in Poland. The leading figure named in the motion was Army-General Wojciech Jaruzelski, at the time the First Secretary of the Polish United Workers’ Party (PZPR; English acronym: PUWP) and Minister of National Defense, and twenty-five others: (members of the Military Council for National Salvation) Czeslaw Kiszczak, Tadeusz Hupalowski, Czeslaw Piotrowski, Michal Janiszewski, Florian Siwicki, Tadeusz Tuczapski, Eugeniusz Molczyk, Jozef Baryla; and (members of the State Council) Henryk Jablonski, Tadeusz Witold Mlynczak, Kazimierz Secomski, Zdzislaw Tomal, Jerzy Zietek, Edward Duda, Eugenia Kempara, Emil Kolodziej, Wladyslaw Kruczek, Krystyna Marszalek-Mlynczyk, Jozef Ozga-Michalski, Henryk Szafranski, Jan Szczepanski, Stanislaw Wronski, Kazimierz

---

<sup>1</sup> The Commission for Constitutional Oversight is a permanent or “statutory” commission of the *Sejm* (Parliament) of the Polish Republic. This standing commission exists whether or not it is actually addressing any matter that Parliament has asked it to consider.

<sup>2</sup> See the preface in *O Stanie Wojennym: W Sejmowej Komisji Odpowiedzialnosci Konstytucyjnej* [On Martial Law: Inside the Sejm Commission on Constitutional Oversight] (Warsaw: Wydawnictwo Sejmowe, 1997), p. 5. This publication includes the majority and the minority report of the Oversight Commission, as well as all the reports submitted by the nine experts.

Barcikowski, Ryszard Reiff, Mieczyslaw Rog-Swiostek. On 13 December 1991, the Marshal of the *Sejm* directed the matter to the Oversight Commission for consideration by Parliament on 29 May 1993.

The Oversight Commission of the *Sejm* (first tenure) held twenty sessions to discuss the motion put forward by the Confederation for an Independent Poland, including fourteen sessions that included the individuals named above in the motion. Later, after Parliament was dissolved and in the aftermath of the parliamentary elections of 1993, on 21 January 1994, the Presidium of the *Sejm* (second tenure) ordered the Oversight Commission to continue its original investigation against the twenty-six persons named in the Martial Law motion. However, the change in government also brought with it a radical shift in the membership of the Oversight Commission. The majority of its members now belonged to the governing coalition from the Democratic Left Alliance and the Polish Peasant Party, and the Commission was now chaired by Professor Jerzy Wiatr, a deputy from the Democratic Left Alliance and later Minister of Education.

On 1 February 1994, the Oversight Commission renewed attempts to gather documents on Martial Law in Poland from the state and party archives of the former PZPR and the Council of Ministers of the former Polish People's Republic, and especially those of the ministries of internal affairs and national defense, as well as archival documents from Moscow and Prague. The Oversight Commission also heard from thirty witnesses (a fraction of those actually called by many of those under investigation) and arranged for nine permanent experts to review the documents, to question the witnesses, and to provide separate written submissions of their findings, with an additional twelve specialized submissions. The nine experts, almost all of them prominent Polish historians, included: Professor Antoni Czubinski of the Institute of History at Adam Mickiewicz University in Poznan, legal scholar Janusz Gaworski, Professor Jerzy Holzer of the Institute for Political Studies at the Polish Academy of Sciences in Warsaw, Professor Krystyna Kersten of the Institute of History at the Polish Academy of Sciences, historian and publisher Janusz Krupski, Professor Jarema Maciszewski of the Institute of History at the University of Warsaw, Professors Andrzej Paczkowski and Andrzej Werblan (see below for details), and Professor Marian Zgorniak of the Institute of History at Jagiellonian University in

Cracow. This Working Paper is the English-language translation of the submissions by Professors Paczkowski and Werblan.

The twenty-six persons named in the original motion gave their final submissions to the Oversight Commission on 16 January 1996. The final discussion by members of the Oversight Commission on the Martial Law question took place on 13 February, which included a roll call vote on the motion. The votes of the coalition partners combined to render a majority verdict with a motion to discontinue the proceedings against *all* twenty-six persons named in the Martial Law motion. In the case of Jaruzelski, Hupalowski, Piotrowski, and Janiszewski, the vote was divided accordingly: five deputies were in favor of the motion, twelve deputies were against the motion, with one deputy abstaining. In the case of Kiszczak: five deputies were in favor of the motion, ten deputies were against it, with three abstaining. In the case of Jablonski, Mlynczak, Secomski, Kempara, Kolodziej, Kruczek, Marszalek-Mlynczyk, Ozga-Michalski, Barcikowski, and Rog-Swiostek: five deputies were in favor of discontinuing the process against them, twelve were against, with one abstention. In the case of Szczepanski, Reiff, and Wronski: the deputies voted unanimously against the motion. The Oversight Commission had in fact already halted proceedings against Siwicki, Tuczapski, Molczyk, and Baryla on 22 September 1992, arguing that they could not be held constitutionally responsible because they did not hold the appropriate statutory government appointments at the time Martial Law was introduced. The proceedings against Tomal, Zietek, Szafranski, and Duda were halted because they had died before the Oversight Commission could submit its final report to Parliament.

On 28 May 1996, the majority of the *Sejm* deputies voted to accept the “Report” prepared by the Oversight Commission. However, a minority, non-binding report signed by six deputies, among them Andrzej Ostoja-Owsiany, Jacek Taylor, Bogdan Boruszewicz, Piotr Pankanin, Ryszard Faszynski, and Jerzy Wierchowicz, was also presented to Parliament. The minority report concluded that there was indeed a case for further investigation against many of those named in the motion on Martial Law and that the matter should be put to the State Tribunal. Largely as a result of the combined vote of the parliamentary coalition partners, on 23 October 1996, the majority of *Sejm* deputies voted to accept the conclusions in the majority report and thus to defeat the motion put forward by the Confederation for an Independent Poland.

The three documents attached as an appendix to this Working Paper have never before been published in Poland or abroad and were at the disposal of the experts appointed to the Oversight Commission. The first document comes from the former Czechoslovak Socialist Republic Ministry of National Defense. It was prepared for Gustav Husak, the Czechoslovak leader at the time, by his minister of defense, Martin Dzur, and it covers the progress and outcome of the 14th meeting of the Warsaw Pact defense ministers committee that took place between 1 and 4 December 1981 in Moscow. The second document is a draft proposal prepared by Polish military planners on 22 October 1980 regarding the introduction of Martial Law for reasons of state security and the underlining consequences of introducing Martial Law. The third document is a protocol of the historic 13 December 1981 meeting of the Committee for the Defense of the Homeland, chaired by Jaruzelski and attended by then PZPR First Secretary Stanislaw Kania. It was at this meeting that the final planning stages for Martial Law were discussed and where it was also announced that the plans for Martial Law had been compromised and forwarded by someone attached to the Polish People's Army General Staff to the Central Intelligence Agency.



**THE CONDITIONS AND MECHANISMS LEADING TO  
THE INTRODUCTION OF MARTIAL LAW:  
REPORT TO THE COMMISSION ON CONSTITUTIONAL OVERSIGHT**

by

**Andrzej Paczkowski**

**(Translated from the Polish by Leo Gluchowski)**

I. THE SOURCE BASE

The collection of documents assembled for the Commission on Constitutional Oversight is a very important source base. Although the collection is relatively large, there are substantial gaps.

It is obvious, for instance, that military documents are underrepresented. The military documents made available to the Commission include the protocols of the Committee for the Defense of the Homeland (hereafter KOK–Komitet Obrony Kraju), and the Military Council of National Salvation (hereafter WRON–Wojskowa Rada Ocalenia Narodowego) meetings, documents of a normative/prescriptive nature, and a set of maps. There are no executive or analytical documents dealing with the role of the armed forces in preparing and implementing Martial Law. And there are no documents, reports, or notes regarding the discussions with representatives of the Soviet military and the General Staff of the Combined Forces of the Warsaw Pact, including the several consultations leading to the introduction of Martial Law, such as the meeting at the end of March and another at the end of November 1981. There is, however, a published article by Lech Kowalski, “Narodziny stanu wojennego [The Origins of Martial Law],” based on archival sources, which cites the KOK protocols.<sup>3</sup>

---

<sup>3</sup> *Arka [The Ark]*, no. 48/6 (1983).

By far the most representative collection of source documents is the series generated by the Ministry of Internal Affairs (MSW–Ministerstwo Spraw Wewnętrznych) and their territorial units. However, it must be pointed out that the protocols of meetings held by the MSW chiefs begin only with the 30 March 1981 session. It is possible, of course, that this group had not met earlier, although this is highly unlikely. Furthermore, we do not have the protocols of the MSW HQ meetings of 23, 25, and 28 March 1981; the time of the so-called “Bydgoszcz crisis”. We can gather from the internal composition of this file,<sup>4</sup> however, that the above mentioned documents had been expunged in 1982, at about the same time the materials concerning the introduction of Martial Law were being assembled (the so-called “Gotowosc [Readiness]” operation).

In any case, the available MSW documents do provide a decent insight into the preparations and operations of the security apparatus and the Citizens’ Militia (MO - Milicia Obywatelska) concerning the introduction of Martial Law. Several key documents have already been published in the Polish press. See especially “The functioning principles of the MSW Leadership and Headquarters at a time of grave internal threat to the state [Zasady funkcjonowania Kierownictwo i Sztabu MSW na czas powaznego zgrozenia bezpieczenstwa panstwa]”, and “Plan of action for the internal affairs ministry under conditions of a state of ‘War’ [Plan dzialania resortu spraw wewnetrznych w warunkach stanu ‘W’]”.

Among the materials from the Central Committee of the Polish United Workers’ Party (PZPR–Polska Zjednoczona Partia Robotnicza), the protocols and appendices of corresponding Secretariat meetings, from 1980, and Politburo meetings, from 1980 to 1981, are missing. These documents are housed in the Archive of Modern Records (AAN–Archiwum Akt Nowych). The gap in this series is in part filled by the previous publication of seventy-eight protocols from the Politburo meetings between 1980-81. See *Tajne dokumenty Biura Politycznego: PZPR a “Solidarnosc” 1980-1981 [Secret Documents of the Politburo: The PUWP and “Solidarity”, 1980-1981]*, edited by Zbigniew Wlodek.<sup>5</sup> However, we do not have all the protocols, especially the appendices prepared for the participants in the proceedings. The selection from the AAN

---

<sup>4</sup> CA MSW [Centralne Archiwum Ministerstwo Spraw Wewnętrznych -- Central Archives of the Ministry of Internal Affairs], sygn. 2309/IV, t.2.

<sup>5</sup> (London, 1992).

also does not include documents from the propaganda department of the Central Committee. Certain documents from the former party archives, published in the volume *Panstwo-Kosciol 1980-1981 [State-Church, 1980-1981]*, help to complete the party files (see documents 6 to 13).<sup>6</sup> The Church-State documents contain official and confidential evaluations of the situation in the country by the party-state leadership.

The files of the CPSU Politburo housed in the archives and prepared for the Commission are not complete. The Soviet documents that were published in Poland by former participants, such as those by Vitalii Pavlov, give only partial insights into the decision-making process of the Soviet leadership.<sup>7</sup> Among the documents collected by the so-called “Suslov Commission,” very little is of an analytical nature. Serious gaps remain in our knowledge of the way opinion was formed and the way decisions were taken by the CPSU Politburo. The “Suslov” documents were published by the Polish press. See “Dokumenty ‘Komisji Suslowa’ [Documents of the ‘Suslov Commission’]”<sup>8</sup> and “Scisle tajne: KPZR o Polsce 1980-81 [Top Secret: The CPSU on Poland, 1980-81]”.<sup>9</sup> We do not have any documents from the Soviet military and the KGB. The documents of the SED Politburo, from the former East German communist party archives, are more complete but their value is limited. They only cover the period between August and December 1980.

The memoirs by a number of the leading personalities engaged in the crisis at the time are an important addition to the archival source base. See, for example, Stanislaw Kania’s, *Zatrzymac konfrontacje [Stop the Confrontation]*,<sup>10</sup> and Wojciech Jaruzelski’s, *Stan Wojenny, dlaczego? [Why Martial Law?]*.<sup>11</sup> The memoirs of lesser value include Mieczyslaw Rakowski’s two volume, *Czas nadziei i rozczrowan [The Time of Hope and Deception]*,<sup>12</sup> Jozef Pinkowski’s, *Horyzont przed burza [Horizon Before the Storm]*,<sup>13</sup> and fragments of Tadeusz Tuczapski’s unpublished memoir, “Kulisy resortu MON [Behind the Scenes at the Ministry of National

---

<sup>6</sup> (London-Warsaw, 1983).

<sup>7</sup> *Bylem rezydentem KGB w Polsce [I was the KGB Resident in Poland]* (Warsaw, 1993).

<sup>8</sup> *Rzeczpospolita [Republic]* (26 August 1993).

<sup>9</sup> *Gazeta Wyborcza [The Voters Gazette]* (12-13 December 1992).

<sup>10</sup> (Wroclaw, 1991).

<sup>11</sup> (Warsaw, 1992).

<sup>12</sup> (Warsaw, 1985-1987).

<sup>13</sup> (Warsaw, 1993).

Defense].”<sup>14</sup> See also *General Kiszczak mowie...: Prawie wszystko... [General [Czeslaw] Kiszczak says...: Almost everything...]*, edited by Witold Beres and Jerzy Skoczylas.<sup>15</sup>

Especially noteworthy is the short narrative by Ryszard Kuklinski, “Wojna z narodem widziana od srodka [War with the Nation as Seen from the Inside],” especially the sections that deal with the preparations for Martial Law made by the General Staff of the Polish People's Army (LWP–Ludowe Wojsko Polskie).<sup>16</sup>

The only substantial memoir from among the Soviet participants to these events is Pavlov's, *Bylem rezydentem KGB w Polsce [I was the KGB Resident in Poland]*, noted above.<sup>17</sup> Unfortunately, this memoir cannot be verified given the gaps from the Soviet archival base. Among the prolific writings of Western politicians, diplomats, and analysts, Polish affairs between 1980-81 are largely marginal. The most prolific writer on the subject remains Professor Zbigniew Brzezinski; his tenure in government ended at the end of 1980.

Secondary sources, to date, that deal with the Polish events of 1980-81 have been based on a very limited archival database. These books and articles are of limited value to the Commission. The best among them is *The Polish Drama: 1980-1982*, by Jan B. de Weydenthal, Bruce D. Porter and Kevin Devlin, published in Poland in 1991, especially the analysis of the Soviet position (see chapters 4, 5 and 9).<sup>18</sup>

The archival materials assembled by the Commission, together with the previously published documents, memoirs, press releases, and the secondary sources, make it possible to present the context under which the decision to implement Martial Law was taken. They also enable us to present a relatively detailed account of the operations that immediately preceded the decision. The report below, however, has more limited ambitions.

## II. THE LEGAL SITUATION AND THE INTRODUCTION OF MARTIAL LAW

---

<sup>14</sup> (typed manuscript, 1993).

<sup>15</sup> (Warsaw, 1991).

<sup>16</sup> *Kultura* (Paris), no. 4/475 (April 1987).

<sup>17</sup> (Warsaw, 1993).

<sup>18</sup> (Lexington, Mass., 1983).

During the summer of 1980, at the moment when the general political crisis erupted in Poland, there were no legal provisions pertaining to the implementation of Martial Law or other extraordinary measures. While statute 2 of article 33 of the Constitution of the Polish People's Republic (PRL–Polska Rzeczpospolita Ludowa) at the time authorized the Council of State to “introduce martial law on part or the entire territory...if deemed necessary for the protection or the security of the state”, no executive acts were passed. Even the document submitted to the KOK on 19 January 1979, regarding “Martial Law in order to protect the state”, was not submitted to the legislative process. In fact, the work to complete a parallel act, that would enable the legal introduction of Martial Law “for reasons of state security,” was not even started. This is why the decisions on the part of the MSW, to make preparations to employ “practical solutions to liquidate the counter-revolutionary center in Gdansk,” taken no later than 18 August 1980, were based solely on the operational plans of the interior ministry for “period ‘W’ (Martial Law)”, or during a “Grave Threat [*PZ–Poważne Zagrożenie*,]” such as strikes and demonstrations.<sup>19</sup>

The orders to prepare the necessary legal acts, in line with the legal provisions cited above from the PRL Constitution, were given to the military authorities. Accordingly, on 22 October 1980, a text was prepared under the title “The proposals regarding the introduction of Martial Law for reasons of state security and the underlining consequences of introducing Martial Law [*Propozycje w przedmiocie trybu wprowadzenia stanu wojennego ze względu na bezpieczeństwo państwa oraz określenie skutków wprowadzenia tego stanu*].” This document was discussed at the KOK meeting of 12 November, where a decision was taken to prepare a timetable for further work. The timetable was confirmed by the KOK Secretary on 5 December. Similar work was also undertaken by the MSW.<sup>20</sup> Among other things, on 8 December, the MSW Investigative Bureau sent to the MO Provincial Committees the draft proposals of normative acts concerning internments. On 20 January 1981, the ministry had at its disposal the complete set of internal documents.

---

<sup>19</sup> CA MSW, “Posiedzenie Sztabu MSW [MSW HQ meeting]”, 29 August 1980, sygn. 2309/IV, t. 2.

<sup>20</sup> CA MSW, “...zespol pracuje nad sprawa dokumentacji na okres X [...work of the committee on the documentation question for period X]”, MSW HQ meeting, 3 December 1980, sygn. 2309/IV, t. 2.

The draft proposals prepared by the LWP General Staff and the MSW were “tested” during “staff games” that took place on 16 February 1981. After completing the first three documents, and after “consultations” with the team that was sent from Moscow, the proposals were confirmed by the KOK Chairman, General Jaruzelski, and accepted by the PZPR First Secretary, Stanislaw Kania, on 27 March. The documents included: “Guiding thoughts concerning the introduction of Martial Law on the territory of the PRL for reasons of state security [Mysl przewodnia wprowadzenia na terytorium PRL stanu wojennego ze wzgledu na bezpieczenstwo panstwa],” “Central plan of action for the political organs of authority and state administration in the case of the necessity of introducing Martial Law in the PRL [Centralny plan dzialania organow politycznych wladzy i administracji panstwowej na wypadek koniecznosci wprowadzenia w PRL stanu wojennego],” and “General outline of action for the Armed Forces [Ramowy plan dzialania sil zbrojnych].” Ten days later, another document was prepared, entitled “General outline of economic measures [Ramowy plan przedsiwziec gospodarczych].” In this manner, according to a participant at one particular KOK meeting, “the essential stage of conceptional planning work was closed.”<sup>21</sup>

The essential set of executive legislative acts had been prepared between April and May 1981. They were submitted to the KOK during their 19 June meeting. Included in this complete set of documents, were draft decrees concerning, among other things, “protecting the security of the state and public order” and the “system of justice”. Several technical draft proposals were also prepared. For example, resolutions of the Presidium of the *Sejm* [Parliament] concerning the convening of parliament, as well as resolutions concerning the secrecy of parliamentary proceedings. Other documents were concerned with propaganda matters; namely a dozen or so press releases, which were to have been released at the moment Martial Law was introduced. Between 25-26 August 1981, it was resolved to have one of the KGB printing presses prepare “announcements concerning the introduction of Martial Law”. The print run was to be ready before 4 September in order to transport the announcements later to Poland.<sup>22</sup>

---

<sup>21</sup> CAW [Centralne Archiwum Wojskowe -- Central Military Archives], “Posiedzenie KOK [KOK meeting]”, 19 June 1981, sygn. teczka nr. 38.

<sup>22</sup> CA MSW, “Notatka z 27 VIII 1981 [Note from 27 August 1981]”, sygn. 2304/IV.

The draft decree “concerning Martial Law” was discussed by the MSW and the Office of the General Prosecutor. The authors of the draft had doubts as to its legal validity. In the “Justification,” “the accepted range of the decree,” they wrote, “goes well beyond the law-making authority of the Council of State.” Nonetheless, the decree authors comforted themselves with the following statement: “in this manner it provides a sufficient legal basis for further law and order activities, connected with the qualification and application of the consequences of implementing Martial Law.”<sup>23</sup>

By mid-September 1981, the final version of the necessary legal acts had been submitted at one of the KOK meetings and accepted. The only thing missing was the necessary signatures. All the important internal documents of the MSW were also ready at this time, including the code names of respective operations. The KOK also stated its readiness, from a “normative-organizational” perspective, to begin the entire operation to introduce Martial Law, forty-eight hours after the political decision had been made.<sup>24</sup>

The procedure and the form used to prepare the resolutions of the Council of State, concerning the introduction of Martial Law, and related executive decrees, begs further commentary. First, it is obvious that these acts and decrees were prepared as a result of the creation of an independent social (political) movement. The coincidence was not accidental. The speed and rhythm of the work on the part of the authorities to prepare documents was, to a definite degree, connected to the fluctuating relationship between the party-state and “Solidarity”. Most noteworthy is the hasty signing of the basic directives of 27 March 1981, during the “hottest” moments of the “Bydgoszcz crisis,” and the final closure of all legal preparations in mid-September, at the time of the 1st Congress of the Independent Self-Governing Trade Union (NSZZ–Niezalezny Samorządny Związek Zawodowy) “Solidarity” Delegates.

Secondly, all the preparations for the introduction of Martial Law were undertaken under the proviso of strict state secrecy. The only state institution that had input into these projects, and was also afforded the opportunity to comment on them, was the KOK. During almost one year of work, public opinion, the *Sejm*, even the Council of Ministers, the highest organ of state authority, had not been informed of the preparations for Martial Law. The Council of State was

---

<sup>23</sup> CA MSW, sygn. 1813/92/1.

also not informed. As far as we can gather, from the existing documentation, not even the PZPR Politburo and Secretariat, as institutions, were kept abreast of the preparations to implement Martial Law. Only individual members from the above mentioned state and party institutions, who belonged to the KOK, or those who held senior positions at the Ministry of National Defense (MON–Ministerstwo Obrony Narodowej) and the MSW, had been kept abreast of the preparations. On the other hand, the relevant documents were submitted, for review, to senior Soviet Army officers and KGB functionaries on at least two occasions, 27 March and 18-19 November 1981. Whether or not the documents forwarded to the Soviets by the Polish side, had been passed on voluntarily is altogether another matter.

Third, the meeting of the Council of State, where the decision to implement Martial Law had been taken, began on 13 December, at around one o'clock in the morning; that is, nine hours after the MSW HQ had already sent to the MO Provincial Committees the following coded message: "I proclaim 'Synchronizacja [Synchronization]'"'. The signal effectively initiated the activities of the interior ministry. Following the transmission of the coded message, certain "actions" that formed the basis of the entire operation began around 11:30 pm on 12 December, before the State Council adopted its resolutions and confirmed the decrees.

Fourth, although it might be a detail without significance, it is nonetheless worth mentioning that among those in attendance at the relevant Council of State meeting, with the exception of General Tadeusz Tuczapski (Deputy Minister of National Defense and the KOK Secretary), who was responsible for presenting the entire package of legal acts to the Council, there were several other LWP officers present. None of them were Council members or members of its staff. However, General Wojciech Jaruzelski (Premier Minister of National Defense, the KOK Chairman and PZPR First Secretary) was not in attendance at the 13 December Council of State meeting. He was elsewhere, making preparations to broadcast on Polish radio and television the decision to declare Martial Law.

All of this, especially the secrecy of the preparations, the commencement of legal consequences, before they had been passed into law as decrees, and the preventive character of the entire operation, gave the act to declare Martial Law the character of a "legal coup d'etat."

---

<sup>24</sup> CAW, sygn. teczka nr. 38, rkps [handwritten].



Moreover, in order to administer formally Martial Law, a special extra-constitutional body was created that disregarded the existing legal regulations. “On 12 December 1981...under the chairmanship of Army-General Wojciech Jaruzelski, and on the initiative of the Military Council of the Ministry of National Defense, a group of LWP officers met and declared that...as a result of the above meeting, the gathered decided to constitute the Military Council of National Salvation [WRON].”<sup>25</sup>

Despite the fact that Martial Law was introduced with the aim of “securing the state [internally],” and not “defending” it from a foreign threat, its implementation was taken over primarily by the military.

### III. THE GOALS AND TACTICS

Without much difficulty, we find, among the documents of the highest PZPR authorities, statements concerning the strategic policies to be taken against the independent social movements. Perhaps the most provocative remark came from the interior minister, General Czeslaw Kiszczak. Three weeks after the introduction of Martial Law, he is quoted as saying that “the goal is to destroy the structures of ‘Solidarity’, the Polish Academy of Sciences, and so on, in order to create new structures exclusively at the disposal of the party.”<sup>26</sup> General Kiszczak may have gone too far when talking about destroying the structures of the Polish Academy of Sciences (or the rapporteur made an error); but he accurately described the basic goal of the authorities towards NSZZ “Solidarity.”

This should not suggest, however, that from the moment “Solidarity” was created all the leading PZPR activists were convinced of the need to “destroy” the movement. There were also those who conceptualized the “swallowing” of the independent trade union into the structures controlled by the PZPR. The question of absorbing “Solidarity” came up again during the summer of 1981, when it was already evident that such a scenario was impossible. For example, one document, put forward as an information and prognostic assessment, and presented at a Secretariat meeting, read: “we can organize a front of national salvation with the participation of

---

<sup>25</sup> CAW, sygn. 1813/92/1.

‘Solidarity’ and the Church. In the future it can be transformed into a reformed Front of National Unity.”<sup>27</sup> This is precisely how, in my opinion, we should understand the concept of a “political resolution,” especially as favored and pushed by Stanislaw Kania. But even he finally admitted that “introducing a transformation in ‘Solidarity’ that would lead in the direction of a trade union with socialist characteristics,” ought to occur under the shield of Martial Law.<sup>28</sup> Among the party documents, expressions such as “compromise [with ‘Solidarity’] is structural in character,” are not found after that meeting.<sup>29</sup>

The MSW documents avoided the language of compromise altogether. The typical remarks (or orders), expressed by General Kiszczak, with regard to the preparations by his ministry of reports put forward at the KOK meetings, used the following formulations: “accentuate and stress the provocative character of the resolutions of the [‘Solidarity’] Congress,” “present the dramatic character of the situation,” “do not talk about evolution, but about counter-evolution”, or “use the term ‘threat of a state of war.’”<sup>30</sup> The question we have to ask ourselves is whether, and to what extent, the security apparatus “steered” the judgement of the highest state authorities.

The security apparatus assumed the principled position in the activities it directed against the independent and legal organizations. I will limit myself to demonstrating only a couple typical operations, characteristic of a police or authoritarian state, that reveal how the security apparatus understood its own functions. I will not discuss, here, such widely used methods as the spreading of gossip, setting the leaders of opposition organization against each other, the writing of anonymous letters, the use of illegal telephone taps, screening correspondence, gathering “compromising material” by employing operational techniques and sending it to certain journalists, and so on. Particular attention should also be given to the “harassing and threatening activities” employed by the security organs, especially “in relation to elderly persons engaged in anti-state activities.”<sup>31</sup>

---

<sup>26</sup> CA MSW, MSW HQ meeting, 8 January 1982, sygn. 2309/IV, t. 2.

<sup>27</sup> AAN, KC PZPR, Secretariat meeting, 17 August 1981, sygn. t. 2258.

<sup>28</sup> CAW, KOK meeting, 13 September 1981, sygn. teczka nr. 38.

<sup>29</sup> Stanislaw Kania, Politburo meeting, 29 October 1980, *Tajne dokumenty Biura Politycznego*, p. 149.

<sup>30</sup> CA MSW, MSW HQ meeting, 12 September 1981, sygn. 252/I.

<sup>31</sup> CA MSW, sygn. 2325/IV/1.

On 15 October 1980, the MO Provincial Committees received orders from the MSW HQ, via the telephone, to forward immediately the lists of people already selected for “isolation” in the case of a “grave threat.” The MSW was incessantly preoccupied with the problem of internment of “Solidarity” activists, the members of other independent organizations, as well as independent or opposition-inclined intellectuals. Internment operations, from February 1981, code-named “Spring [Wiosna],” and from September, code-named “Heather [Wrzos],” had been prepared to the smallest detail. They were systematically “updated” so that they could be put into operation at any given moment. According to the lists prepared as of 31 December 1980, the number of people that were to be interned amounted to 12,900 persons, about half for political reasons and the remainder for posing a threat to “public order”. On 26 February 1981, the list of those to be interned in prison was completed, together with the appropriate quotas for all the MO Provincial Committees, for a total of 13,600 places. The arrest and internment procedures were definitively described in the document called J-0045/81M, dated 17 February 1981. It was on the basis of this document that, shortly before midnight on 12 December, using the signal “Birch 81 [Brzoza 81],” the internments actually began.

During the fall of 1981 (although I was unable to find the documents that would enable me to give a precise date; but it could not have been later than 4 October) operation “Heather” became an element of a more general plan, described as the “Pine [Jodla]” operation. Internment was to be the “first stage.” The second stage followed the order given by General Kiszczak to regroup the “‘Solidarity’ activists who could replace the extremists groups” at all the regional councils and the major enterprise commissions.<sup>32</sup> The responsible Security Service (SB–Sluzba Bezpieczenstwa) sections, in fact Department III-A, undertook the necessary preparations, and drafted: “Plans undertaken to date regarding the second stage of operation ‘Pine’ [Plany przedsiwziec dotyczacych drugiego etapu akcji ‘Jolda’].”<sup>33</sup> During the first meeting of the MSW leadership, after the introduction of Martial Law, it was decided to “increase efforts leading to operations with the aim of creating a new and completely “people's” “Solidarity”.<sup>34</sup>

---

<sup>32</sup> CA MSW, MSW HQ meeting, 4 October 1981, sygn. 252/I.

<sup>33</sup> See for instance CA MSW, “Komenda Stoieczna [The Warsaw Detachment]”, sygn. spis 156, poz. 81 t. IV.

<sup>34</sup> CA MSW, sygn. 251/I.

This element of the preparations for Martial Law deserves particular attention. It vividly demonstrates the active role of the security apparatus in shaping the political situation, including its armed domination of those constituting the spontaneous and nascent civil society.

During the second half of December 1980, in the materials prepared for the meeting of the MSW activists with Stanislaw Kania, it was asserted that “at this present stage it would not be prudent to undertake a general and concentrated offensive...because this could lead to unforeseen consequences,” and that “fundamental difficulties in regaining control of the situation with our own resources” could arise. As a result, it was proposed to adopt the tactic of “partial confrontations,” which “give greater chances before the rising of a general confrontation.”<sup>35</sup> Particular “attacks,” to be executed within the framework of this tactic, the authors of this document continued, can provoke a reaction such as a broader confrontation and even provide the pretext to declare Martial Law. They gave, as an example, the arrest of Jacek Kuron and “his close collaborators.” Next, they would bring them to trial. And then, “if we incidentally detect initiatives aimed at calling an important strike action in defense of J. Kuron, and having exhausted all other means of influence, declare Martial Law for the regions threatened by such an action.”

Without doubt, we are dealing here with the tactics of provocation. There are many reasons to emphasize that such a “partial confrontation,” leading to a “general confrontation,” in fact took place in March 1981. Unfortunately, among the documents put at the disposal of the Commission, there is only one such document, and it is “circumstantial [poszlakowy].” On 18 March, the Deputy Interior Minister, General Boguslaw Stachura, turned to the chief of the LWP General Staff with the following: “in connection with the planned operations of the MSW HQ representatives,” among the military units in Bydgoszcz, “make available the quartering and supplying” of 1300 MO functionaries.<sup>36</sup> Indeed, these officers arrived a day later, and it led to the so-called “Bydgoszcz Incident”; later the “Bydgoszcz Crisis.” It was the most dramatic event after August 1980. And it was the same scenario as Kuron’s arrest except instead of arrests there were beatings. The rest of the events are well-known, but it is worth recalling that at the time of the 24 March Politburo meeting, one of the exponents of the “hard line”

---

<sup>35</sup> CA MSW, sygn. 2298/4.

acknowledged that it was imperative to “resort to physical pressures, of our own making, if it will be necessary to reach a solution.”<sup>37</sup> Three days later, even Stanislaw Kania said that “it might become essential to introduce Martial Law.”<sup>38</sup> The very same day, Stanislaw Kania and General Jaruzelski signed the above mentioned document, “Guiding thoughts concerning the introduction of Martial Law.” Beginning 17 March, the “Soyuz-81” maneuvers, which had been announced one month earlier, took place.

Analyzing the “Bydgoszcz Crisis,” General Wladyslaw Pozoga noted, among other things, that in order to introduce the “necessary solutions”, as a result of which it is possible to use operations to preempt the enemy, “indispensable will be the precise pretext, which will give us a large part of public opinion,” and “thoughts about this pretext must be prepared in a detailed plan of operation.”<sup>39</sup>

The tactic of “partial confrontations,” and creating “excuses,” was particularly evident in the fall of 1981. At the above mentioned 4 October MSW Leaders meeting, a significant list of tasks was adopted. Included among them was the following: “[Task] 24. Increase activities in a direction to ‘lead’ the enemy ‘up the garden path,’ into a situation that will put the enemy in a difficult or compromising position.” At the time, the PZPR leadership wanted to maintain an atmosphere of tension, even to “heat up” the public mood, because only a series of incidents or strikes could provide the pretext to introduce Martial Law. Despite the fact that the available archival sources on this matter are decidedly laconic, it is necessary to draw attention to two declarations made by General Jaruzelski during the 26 November 1981 Secretariat meeting: (1) “not to allow Hebda to capitulate,” and (2), on “the Lublin question—heat up the subject.”<sup>40</sup> The first statement concerned the month long strike at the Radom secondary school. It related to its rector, Mieczyslaw Hebda. As a result of Radom, a wave of strikes by students spread throughout Poland, which was also linked to the strike by student-officer cadets from the Higher Officer’s School of Firefighting. The strike by teachers, in Lublin began on 19 November. I am not sure, but I am prepared to defend the thesis that in the case of the conflicts at all post-

---

<sup>36</sup> CA MSW, sygn. 2303/IV.

<sup>37</sup> *Tajne dokumenty Biura Politycznego*, p. 302.

<sup>38</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 321.

<sup>39</sup> CA MSW, MSW HQ meeting, 2 April 1981, sygn. 252/I.

<sup>40</sup> AAN, KC PZPR, sygn. t. 2260.

secondary institutions as well as the secondary schools, it was not merely a question of propaganda activities but also of the “operational activities” of the SB.

There is no doubt that the operations by the security apparatus, such as interventions in the internal workings of the social organizations—the second stage of the "Pine" operation—or the use of the tactics of provocations, were in total contradiction of the lawful order.

I would like to point out one more element of the activities related to the preparations and introduction of Martial Law. No later than December 1980, it was decided to “create groups of people who were trustworthy, and foresee the possibility of arming them, should such a need arise.”<sup>41</sup> [The] “Guiding thoughts” [directive] was signed in March 1981, and it foresaw “the arming of willing persons of the highest confidence who, with total sacrifice and devotion, are determined to defend socialism.”<sup>42</sup> The final executive decisions were made on 10 September and 5 October 1981. According to the data compiled by the MSW, the list prepared included 7,768 persons.<sup>43</sup> At the Secretariat meeting of 20 October 1981, General Jaruzelski gave as an example the town of Nowy Sącz, where they created “trusted groups, gave them matches, gas...The youth,” he added, “felt strongly that it had to defend the party.”<sup>44</sup> During the 8 October 1981 Secretariat meeting, General Józef Baryła concluded that the “first secretary of the Warsaw Committee ought to create, around himself, a party guard—the military of the first secretary of the Warsaw Committee.”<sup>45</sup>

During the MSW Leadership meeting, immediately following the introduction of Martial Law, it was decided that “we have to draw from wherever possible, to create immediately provincial detachments. We have to ‘squeeze out’ the arms for these detachments from General [Wacław] Szklarski [chief of the operations directorate of the General Staff]. Locate the detachments wherever possible: in boarding-school, schools...”<sup>46</sup> According to the information presented at the 8 January 1982 MSW HQ meeting: “49 thousand individual weapons and 7

---

<sup>41</sup> Politburo meeting, 6 December 1980, *Tajne dokumenty Biura Politycznego*, p. 190.

<sup>42</sup> CA MSW, sygn. 1813/92/1.

<sup>43</sup> CA MSW, sygn. 2309/IV/4 cz. 2.

<sup>44</sup> AAN PZPR, sygn. 2259.

<sup>45</sup> AAN PZPR, sygn. t. 2260.

<sup>46</sup> CA MSW, MSW meeting, 15 December 1981, sygn. 251/1.

million rounds of ammunition have been secured for the activists.”<sup>47</sup> It was the equivalent of arming five divisions with light arms.

(At the time, journalists waited impatiently for information about armed “Solidarity” assault teams, the existence of which was one of the arguments used to introduce Martial Law. And they did not wait in vain. In the protocols of the 17 December 1981 MSW Leadership meeting, we find the following passage: “Comrade [Bonifacy] Jedynak [director of the cadres department] reports that in Piotrkow they arrested two ‘Solidarity’ members who had pistols of their own making. The minister [Kiszczak] recommends to use this information immediately and to exploit it for propaganda, possibly in the first upcoming edition of the TV news.”<sup>48</sup> If I am not mistaken, this was the only news about the arming of enemy detachments.)

There can be no doubt that the arming of party militants was a serious and dangerous transgression of legal norms given its possible consequences.

Independent of whether or not we accept the arguments about “the threat to the vital interests of the state and nation,” “disturbing the peace, tranquillity, and public order,” that are used to justify the introduction of Martial Law, the activities connected to its introduction, by the security apparatus and a significant part of the state administration, were based on illegal methods. And they had the sanction of the highest party-state agents.

#### IV. THE EXTERNAL FACTOR

An analysis and evaluation of the influence of “the external agent” means, in reality, primarily the role of the Soviet leadership. Soviet influence on the development of events in Poland, and on the introduction of Martial Law, is at the same time an easy and a difficult assignment. It is easy because the Kremlin had a straightforward attitude to the creation and existence of “Solidarity”: the trade union had to be annihilated. This was beyond debate. It is difficult because I know of too few elements to establish the methods, the actors, and at what

---

<sup>47</sup> CA MSW, sygn. 2309/IV/t. 2.

tempo this was to be accomplished. In addition, it is precisely the “external factor” that is the topic, especially among the many polemical debates, brought to public debate. Much of it is impossible to verify. Among the archival materials put together by the Commission, very little, unfortunately, contains information that would allow for a critical analysis of the published revelations.

On the basis of currently published information, we can, I believe, establish that among the activities of the Communist Party of the Soviet Union (hereafter CPSU) leaders, there emerged two markedly different phases.

First, sharp, even brutal, pressure was combined with such political-military facts as the planned military maneuvers, or “Soyuz-80”, of December 1980, as well as the realization of the “Soyuz-81” maneuvers of March-April 1981. This also includes the 5 December 1980 leadership conference of the seven socialist states that met exclusively to discuss Polish matters. This phase ended, perhaps, at the beginning of April 1981. It is possible that the breakthrough occurred as a result of a meeting on a train near Brzesc, kept secret, on the late evening and early morning of 3 and 4 April, between General Jaruzelski and Stanislaw Kania, on the one side, and Marshal Dimitrii Ustinov and KGB chief Yuri Andropov, on the other side. To a certain extent, all this resembled the situation which Czechoslovakia found itself in 1968; namely, the collective pressure from the “fraternal leaders”, and the military exercises.

The second phase stage is best described by a quote from Leonid Brezhnev at the 16 April 1981 CPSU Politburo meeting. He posited the following information, received a day earlier, after a telephone conversation with Stanislaw Kania: “On the one hand, it is not necessary to harass them [the Poles] without a reason, to increase the level of anxiety, so that they should not resign themselves. But, on the other hand, it is necessary to exert constant pressure.”<sup>49</sup>

To be sure, such pressure was exerted. This subject has been widely written about by Wojciech Jaruzelski and Stanislaw Kania in their respective memoirs. It is also confirmed by the numerous documents, including the Soviet and Polish politburo protocols, as well as other accounts. One of the more important testimonies in this regard was given by Ryszard Kuklinski,

---

<sup>48</sup> CA MSW, sygn. 251/1.



whose dramatic account is quite trustworthy. Certain elements of the pressure exerted by the Soviets were, quite deliberately, spectacular. On 4 September, perhaps not without coincidence, on the eve of the opening of the First “Solidarity” Congress, the “Zapad 81” manoeuvres began on the eastern Baltic and the Belorussian Soviet Socialist Republic. Western analysts regarded these military exercises as the largest ever conducted by the Soviet Army. On 17 September, a letter from the CPSU Central Committee (and the Soviet government) was published, which decidedly disapproved of the “soft line” taken by Kania. A month later, he was replaced by General Jaruzelski.

From that moment, more or less, the external pressures assumed—if it is possible to put it this way—a more “discreet” character. Frankly, the pressures now suited the form necessary to undertake preparations for the introduction of Martial Law. The visit of Marshal Viktor Kulikov, the commander of the Warsaw Pact forces, to Poland that took place between 24 and 25 November, was crucial. During the visit, all the preparations were completed. The “legal frame of reference” as finalized and the announcements were stored in Warsaw. The necessary internal instructions within the MSW, and the organs responsible for guarding the borders, also had been distributed, including, it appears, inside the armed forces. Perhaps all that was missing, to commence with “Zero hour,” was an appropriate propaganda pretext.

It is not clear whether Leonid Brezhnev ever wanted to repeat the “Czechoslovak variant” in Poland. Recommendations “in favor” were made at the December 1980 conference of the “seven” in Moscow. Preparation were made by the Soviet Army and also by the military of the German Democratic Republic (hereafter GDR) and Czechoslovakia. There was, however, even at this phase, at least one fundamental difference among the military planners. The map that indicated the planned location of the armies of intervention in Poland, shown to the representatives of the Polish General Staff, especially called to Moscow for consultations, also foresaw a decidedly secondary role for the LWP.<sup>50</sup> We may reasonably suspect that this was an attempt to undermine the Polish position; but as far as I can tell, to date, none of the military commanders has pursued this hypothesis. It is therefore more probable that the Kremlin counted on the collaboration of Polish armed forces. We cannot exclude that this was simply another

---

<sup>49</sup> Pavlov, *Bylem rezydentem KGB w Polsce*, p. 331.

aspect of the pressure exerted on the Polish side by the Soviets or, to put it another way—  
blackmail.

As long as we are discussing hypotheses (unfortunately the archival materials allow for little else), we can include the “one-on-one scenario” in the debate. In essence, an intervention by Soviet forces alone. Aspects favoring this particular hypothesis are based on the fact that no large scale military maneuvers incorporated the GDR and the Czechoslovak armies. It is highly unlikely that intervention would have taken place with training that did not include the Polish armed forces. An important element of this hypothesis is the lack of collective political consultations between the leaders of the states neighboring Poland. At the 2 April 1981 CPSU Politburo meeting, during a “hot” moment, just after the end of the “Bydgoszcz Crisis”, Brezhnev and Ustinov agreed that at the conference of the “seven”, at the highest level, the Polish case remains “in reserve”. Marshal Ustinov even added that “now, however, we have to take the necessary steps so that the Polish friends can act independently.”<sup>51</sup> The first step in this direction was the previously mentioned meeting between Kania-Jaruzelski and Andropov-Ustinov.

The most probable hypothesis, insofar as I am concerned, is that military intervention in Poland, for the Soviet leadership, understood as the independent deployment of the Soviet Army, was possible only under extreme circumstances; namely, the dramatic breakdown of the system. From among the documents known to me, there is also no clear indication that the Soviets were forming an alternative leadership group in Poland to the Kania-Jaruzelski tandem; despite the fact that on the *Wisła* there was no shortage of volunteers, and their names were well known to the Kremlin. These candidates, seemingly inspired by Moscow, attempted an unsuccessful “palace coup” during the 9 and 10 June 1981 PZPR Central Committee plenum. While personnel matters, even after Kania's fall, remained the object of attention and concern to the Kremlin, there are no clear indications to show that the Soviets took steps to construct a new group of “hard liners”. It is therefore inconceivable that the Soviets would initiate any kind of intervention without having secured for themselves strong political support. Perhaps it was already assumed that the full PZPR leadership had sufficiently “hardened.”

---

<sup>50</sup> CAW, sygn. 1839/94/1.

Among the documents analyzed, especially those produced by the LWP and the MSW, we find scattered indications that enable us to put forward another hypothesis. The Soviet Army and the military of the neighboring socialist states were supposed to play a supportive role during the execution of Martial Law.

In the 23 November 1981 document, that summarized the operations undertaken from July, prepared by the Polish General Staff, we read: “Conceptually, we assume the actual possibility of introducing Martial Law by surprise or by a creeping method. A series of practical activities, useful in both scenarios, have already been implemented...With regard to ensuring the full and correct implementation of the transportation of our own and the allied armies...further arrangements have been organized.”<sup>52</sup>

In the document, entitled “Evaluation of the present situation in the country as of 25 November 1981 [Ocenie aktualnej sytuacji w kraju wg. stanu na dzien 25 listopada br.],” prepared by the MSW HQ, three variations were presented concerning the outcome of the situation after the imposition of Martial Law. The most pessimistic variation envisioned the following: “a national occupation strike, certain factory workers take to the streets, street demonstrations, and buildings housing the party, the state administration, the MO, and others, are attacked.” The conclusion: “It leads to acute intervention by the MO and the military forces. Assistance from the Warsaw Pact forces is not out of the question.”<sup>53</sup>

The first of these citations (see above from the 23 November 1981 document prepared by the General Staff) is not altogether clear. It is possible that the authors were discussing the daily, normal circulation of Soviet Army columns and detachments. However, we cannot exclude the possibility that the text concerned the transport of the other allied armies also, within the framework of support operations. The second citation (see above from the 25 November document prepared by the MSW HQ) leaves no room for doubt as to its formulation. But it is unclear whether it merely expressed the opinion (“wishful thinking”) of the authors at the MSW HQ. Among this particular group, on a number of occasions, doubts were expressed earlier as to the possibility of executing Martial Law without external assistance. These concerns were

---

<sup>51</sup> Pavlov, *Byłem rezydentem KGB w Polsce*, p. 310.

<sup>52</sup> CAW, sygn. 1813/92/1.

<sup>53</sup> CA MSW, sygn. 228/1B.

expressed by, for example, General Wladyslaw Ciaston, during the 29 May 1981 MSW HQ meeting,<sup>54</sup> and again by General Miroslaw Milewski, during the 12 June 1981 discussion concerning “Estimation of the political-operations situation [Ocena sytuacji operacyjno-politycznej].”<sup>55</sup>

Another factor, in support of this hypothesis, is the well-known account by General Viktor Dubynin, published in *Gazeta Wyborcza [The Voters Gazette]* on 14-15 March 1992. He argued that soon after 13 December, his armored divisions “shut off their engines.” There were also a series of announcements by Kremlin leaders, during their Politburo meetings held in the late Fall of 1981. It can also be supported by the fact that among the documents known to me, and among the memoirs or other accounts by Polish politicians and military personnel, I did not come across even one phrase concerning contingencies in the case of an intervention by the allied armies. Yet the introduction of Martial Law was an extremely carefully planned operation, laid out to the smallest detail, including the plans to quarter certain candidates attached to the “Heather” operation. Hundreds of people were busily involved in the planning, mainly from among the best specialists in logistics, communication, and operational training. As a result, we have thousands of pages of reports, tables, charts, and maps. Unfortunately, only a small part of this material has been made available. The archives continue to hide many secrets. Perhaps this is also part of the puzzle.

Was it supposed to be military intervention or fraternal assistance? It is difficult to say. During the last meeting of the MO Provincial Committees, before the introduction of Martial Law, the following was suggested: “use the fear of intervention, the concentration of armies on the frontiers, that not only the Soviet Army can intervene but also the Czech and the German, and that there is no way out of this.”<sup>56</sup> It would appear that the Soviet Army was appropriate for every occasion.

## V. PRELIMINARY CONCLUSION

---

<sup>54</sup> CA MSW, sygn. 2309/4 cz 2.

<sup>55</sup> CA MSW, sygn. 2308/4.

<sup>56</sup> CA MSW, sygn. 228/1B.

“The Martial Law dispute” remains, and perhaps will always remain, a historiographic and philosophical controversy connected with people's outlook on life or, at best, a political dispute. The decisions implemented during the late afternoon of 12 December 1981 were (and continue to be), for some people, the starting point of an attempt to bring an end to anarchy, in accordance with “the vital interests of the state and the nation,” even an attempt to impair the constitutional order to which they had become accustomed. For others, the introduction of Martial Law was an obstacle on the road to natural law, to individual freedom, and to national sovereignty.

The role of the historian, under such circumstances, is at the same time as difficult as it is thankless. I am not in fact able to give a straightforward answer to the question: “Was Martial Law necessary?” In my report to the Commission, regardless of what answer we give to the above question, I want to draw attention to the following facts:

During the process of more than one year of preparation to “Zero hour,” on the part of the state administration and services, especially the security apparatus—supervised and inspired by the leadership of the Polish United Workers’ Party—there were numerous instances of activities that went beyond the confines of the law. They also violated the liberty of citizens, as well as their private property.

Warsaw, 10 February 1995

**DIFFICULT DECISION:  
REPORT ON THE CIRCUMSTANCES SURROUNDING  
THE INTRODUCTION OF MARTIAL LAW IN POLAND IN DECEMBER 1981  
BASED ON THE MATERIALS AT THE DISPOSAL OF  
THE COMMISSION ON CONSTITUTIONAL OVERSIGHT  
OF THE *SEJM* OF THE REPUBLIC OF POLAND**

by

**Andrzej Werblan**

**(Translated from the Polish by Leo Gluchowski)**

I

The conclusions reached on the basis of documents derived from the archives of other foreign states, as well as the published accounts by politicians and military commanders of those states, have been presented by me in a report dated 19 April 1994. Further research did not lead to any new conclusions and confirmed what I have previously written. However, I would like to add a few supplementary remarks.

The October 1994 issue of the monthly *Dzis [Today]* published fragments of the memoir by Georgii Shakhnazarov, former secretary of the so-called "Suslov" Commission throughout its tenure of existence, under the title "The Death of the Socialist Community." Among other things, he wrote: "During the Commission meetings, the chiefs" according to the terminology of the day, "of the 'power ministries' expressed themselves rather strongly. In practically all matters they found that the minister of foreign affairs was in solidarity with them. Half-hearted attempts to avoid final decisions were made by Central Committee secretary K.V. Rusakov and the USSR ambassador to Poland at the time, B.I. Aristov. Due to this fact, it has to be stressed that absolute agreement was reached on one matter: at the ["Suslov"] Commission meetings the possibility of using our military contingencies in Poland [in 1981] was never discussed". But

this was precisely why, Shakhnazarov added, "all possible means of political pressure [between 1980-81] had been set in motion." It is not a clear statement. We do not know what "final" decisions had been discussed and what the chiefs of the "power" ministries demanded. What should we understand by the term "our military contingencies in Poland?" Was it to be the army stationed in our country that belonged to the Northern Army Group, or was it also to be the Soviet Army in general?

The military sources provide us with different information. Among the materials of the Commission on Constitutional Oversight (file no. 083/94), we find maps, prepared in September 1980, that document the "Soyuz-80" maneuvers and, what appears to be even more important, the preliminary designs for the "Soyuz-81" maneuvers, which were planned for 1981. From the legends of these maps, it appears that reconnaissance for this exercise had been carried out. Therefore, the military transfer routes had been outlined, and consequently the accommodations, the logistics, and so on. According to the "Soyuz-81" plans, three Soviet armies, the 21st, the 23rd, and the 38th, were supposed to penetrate Polish territory, in addition to the Czechoslovak and the GDR armies. We know from elsewhere that the intervention in Czechoslovakia in 1968 was, in fact, organized and operationally planned under the pretext of an inter-allied exercise. The above mentioned maps indirectly confirm the account given by General Viktor Dubynin, in *Novoe vremya*, no. 26 (1992), to the effect that the armored division under his command, and based in Belorussia, was supposed to occupy the region south of Warsaw. According to the plan of "Soyuz-81," the Soviet 38th Army, consisting of 5 divisions from the Belorussian region, was indeed supposed to have moved to the Warsaw region. We also find documentary confirmation, in the archives of the former GDR, of plans to transfer units of the East German military in the direction of the Szczecin and Koszalin provinces, about which I have written in my previous report.

Questions arise, therefore, about how to explain the differences that appear in the accounts by the CPSU political activists, and the accounts by the Soviet military. I have previously presented a certain hypothesis on this subject. When Gorbachev says that the Soviet Politburo had not made any decisions concerning military intervention in Poland, he is probably not mistaken. These types of decisions were taken there at the last moment, when the process of

invasion was already practically underway (Czechoslovakia), or even *ex post* (Afghanistan). It is also possible that Shakhnazarov is correct, when he writes, that the "Suslov" Commission never broached the military intervention scenario. Yet there is no reason to disbelieve the accounts by General Dubynin and General Dmitrii Volkogonov, who wrote in his 1994 letter to General Jaruzelski: "You saved Poland from a Soviet invasion," or the German documents concerning the talks between General Heinz Hoffman with Marshal Viktor Kulikov in Legnica, and the statements about the direct preparations on the part of the East German military to march into Poland.<sup>57</sup>

If we assume that the authors of these accounts said what they indeed recalled (acknowledging that subsequent information has had a certain impact on their statements), the contradictions that exist in these accounts, regarding the plans for a Soviet intervention in Poland, can only indicate that alternative plans of action had been discussed and prepared: political pressure and blackmail, as well as military intervention. The former scenario was the preferred option, while the latter option, at the very least, was not excluded. The Soviet establishment included enthusiastic proponents of each of these solutions. Military planning undertaken by the Soviets was outside the scope of the "Suslov" Commission, which was created to analyze the political and organizational aspects of the political pressures.<sup>58</sup>

The final answer to the question about the design and the plans of the Soviet oligarchy regarding Poland between 1980-81, has to be sought not so much among the documents of the "Suslov" Commission, but among those of the Soviet Politburo itself, and the operational documentation of the leading organs of the Soviet Army and the KGB. At present, these documents continue to be inaccessible. In any case, the Polish side, at that time not even privy

---

<sup>57</sup> The documentary materials and accounts presented here have been discussed by me in a larger piece published on 19 April 1994. See Werblan, "Czy w 1981 roku grozila interwencja? [Was intervention threatened in 1981]," *Dzis*, no. 6 (45), pp. 38-48.

<sup>58</sup> This pressure acquired very brutal forms and went as far as direct threats to use force. General Dmitrii Volkogonov, who was present at a number of discussions with Marshal Kulikov and General Jaruzelski, characterized the issue accordingly in an interview for *Gazeta Wyborcza* (11 December 1992): "for those who used party jargon in everyday life, these threats were more than obvious...It was said: if the Polish leadership does not demonstrate that it has total control of the situation, the Soviet leadership will feel obliged to undertake adequate actions under the circumstances". As far as concrete plans for invasion were concerned, Volkogonov added: "I did not know of any, but I am sure that they had to exist. At the time, I held a fairly low position, I did not have access to most of the secrets". This "low" position was that of the deputy chief of the Chief Political Administration of the



to the information that has presently become public knowledge, had an obligation to take into account, seriously, the threat of a military intervention. Due not only to historic experiences (Hungary, Czechoslovakia, Afghanistan), but also to the military deployments, the massive political pressures and the unmistakable threats employed. The matter was all the more serious because the PRL authorities, at the time, were unable to verify Soviet plans through their intelligence networks, since they did not conduct intelligence operations against the Soviets. From other sources, it is known that NATO member-states, that had at their disposal intelligence information, estimated the threat of Soviet intervention in Poland to be serious, and real, during the entire period from the fall of 1980 to the end of 1981.<sup>59</sup>

## II

The internal aspects of evaluating the introduction of Martial Law can be divided largely into two groups: the legal issues and the socio-political issues. I do not feel competent to debate the legal issues. I will limit myself, therefore, to the social and political issues. The essence of the matter begs a question. Could the political and social situation in Poland, at the end of 1981, be characterized, or perceived, as a "state of higher necessity." The source base, to answer this question, is incomplete. The available documentation is significantly one-sided. Represented in abundance is the information that the governmental agencies administered, as well as analysis and discussions directed at, and by, government institutions. There is also a fairly good basis for a reasonably objective look at the economic situation. Considerably poorer documentation, in any case among the Commission documents, covers the activities and the intentions of "Solidarity", its national and local executives, including the behavior of the local organizations and the rank-and-file membership. Here, we have to rely mainly on published accounts and

---

Soviet Army. A mania for secrecy in that state was taken to its extreme.

<sup>59</sup> On this issue there are countless statements. Ronald Reagan, in his memoirs (pp. 301-302), writes: "by late Spring [1981], after becoming familiar with intelligence reports stating that the Soviets were considering invading Poland, I wrote to Brezhnev". Alexander Haig, in his book *Reagan and Foreign Policy* (New York, 1984) asserts: "there was never any doubt that this popular movement in Poland would be strangled by the Soviet Union." Margaret Thatcher, in *My Years on Downing Street*, wrote: "Beginning at the end of 1980, the Americans were convinced that the USSR planned direct military intervention to break the Polish reform movement, the same way they did with Prague Spring of 1968".

press releases.<sup>60</sup> And these sources are not sufficient. In spite of these limitations, however, it is possible to put forward certain conclusions, and to propose a number of hypotheses.

1. The economic situation, and as a consequence the social situation of the population, especially among the urban population, underwent a systemic and significant deterioration in 1981. At the end of the year, a critical state had been reached in such areas as food supplies to the cities, the most necessary items, and fuel.<sup>61</sup> The inflation rate grew to dramatic levels. The reasons for the economic breakdown were many. Very important factors relate to the systemic drawbacks of real socialism. This issue has been best characterized and analyzed by Janos Kornai, in his volume *Economics of Shortage* (Amsterdam, 1980). However, a consideration of this question may be skipped in our analysis. In 1981, the economic situation had drastically deteriorated in comparison to the "normal" realities, typical for Poland in the past and in subsequent years, and thus in the composition of the reality already burdened by the shortcomings of the command-rationing system. We, therefore, have to focus our attention on those elements that, on the spur of the moment and in some measure, brought about its further deterioration.

The current documentation, at the disposal of the Commission on Constitutional Oversight, allows us to point, at most, to three elements. The first, and most important, was the breakdown of foreign trade and, above all, the supply of raw materials and semi-finished materials based on imports. This was, in part, provoked by a decline in local production and exports, and in part by the economic blockade introduced by the USSR and the neighboring socialist states.<sup>62</sup> Its main impact, by no means exclusive, was on the supply of oil.

The second element, destroying the economy, was the persistent strikes that provoked a significant decline in industrial output, including the drastic and, worse still, sudden decline in the production and export of coal. The rapidly growing and strengthening "Solidarity" organizations used strikes with vehemence to seek legitimacy and to affirm their own identity.

---

<sup>60</sup> The most complete description of these materials has been provided by Jerzy Holzer in his book, *Solidarnosc 1980-1981: Geneza i historia [Solidarity, 1980-1981: Genesis and History]* (Paris, 1984).

<sup>61</sup> See the speech by Zenon Komender at the 7 December 1981 meeting of the Council of Ministers.

<sup>62</sup> The deputy minister of the chemical industry, Szymczarz, at the meeting cited above, said that the supply of crude oil from the USSR, systematically delayed in 1981, broke down completely beginning in the third week of November.

In 1981, "Solidarity" was not a movement of economic reform, but of revindication. In the social sense, it wanted not so much to change the system, but rather to fulfill a socialist utopia. That is why the dominant current of the strike movement had an uncontrolled revindication character. Nevertheless, between the beginning of March 1980 [sic], strikes erupted over everything: prestige and personal issues, to halt the export of meat, about important and secondary matters.

The third element, albeit not the least important factor in the breakdown of the economy, was the policy of the government. The authorities, helpless in face of the strike movement, and poised to wait out the wave of protests, quite humbly compromised and printed worthless money to buy the false illusion of peace. The authorities and "Solidarity" accused each other of provoking the economic breakdown. As a matter of fact, together, and pretty much in agreement, they successfully destroyed the economy.

2. The prospect for compromise between the state authorities and "Solidarity" were slim and in time, decreased further. This happened not so much as a result of bad will on the part of either side, but as a result of the sociological nature of both sides in the conflict. The thesis, popular at the time, about the self-limiting "Solidarity" revolution was attractive, from a propaganda point of view, but it was not confirmed by the reality. "Solidarity" had all the attributes of a spontaneous movement. Its leaders emerged quickly; only with difficulty did it surrender to discipline and organization. The quote by Henry Sienkiewicz, writing about the Cossack mutiny in *Ogniem i mieczem (1984) [With Fire and the Sword]*, applied to "Solidarity": "towarzystwo stoi na majdanie i o glowe samego atamana gotowe poprosic [the companions stand on the maidan, ready to ask for the head of the hetman himself]". A movement such as this had to become radicalized, and escalate its demands, because it had a sense, perhaps a false sense, of its own might. Only within certain limits could its leaders moderate the demands of the movement. This was a revolutionary situation. And revolution, as George Lukas correctly observed, resembles a courser in gallop: you can get on it, or die under its hoofs.

The authorities, and the PZPR activists, quite obviously, did not understand the nature of "Solidarity". Formed by a bureaucratized and inflexible organization, with a stiff and hierarchical system of initiative and orderliness, they were ready to expect the partner to behave

in a similar manner. They expected the leaders of "Solidarity" to be able to rule over the organization, and to be able to conclude, and to uphold, the agreements that they had signed.<sup>63</sup> The reality, however, was different. One of the best experts on the subject, a direct participant in the events, and an inquisitive analyst, Karol Modzelewski, in an interview with the Cracow-based *Zdaniem [Opinion]*, no. 1 (1994), put the dilemma facing the "Solidarity" advisors accordingly: "They had a sense of mission, that they had to save Poland...to save Poland, you had to force the masses to respect the demands of reason, the demands of political realism. However, since you cannot forcibly teach a crowd reason, you had to force the leader to learn, and to inflate him, just enough, so that he could curb the masses. And they did just that." The movement, nonetheless, slipped from the hands of the ["Solidarity"] leadership.<sup>64</sup>

A particularly dangerous situation developed in the fall of 1981. Due to the fatigue of the masses, natural under such circumstances, a certain decrease in "Solidarity's" influence was already evident at the time; symptoms of social apathy appeared. Precisely at such moments, in revolutionary organizations closely connected to the masses and able to feel every tremor of their mood, extremists tendencies arise. They emerge from the feeling: If not now, then when? This is the way, I believe, to interpret the speeches at the Radom session of "Solidarity's" National Coordinating Commission, and its resolutions. This is also the way to judge the outcome of the mass demonstrations, foreseen in mid-December, to commemorate the events of 1970. The situation inevitably rolled towards confrontation.

One solution could have been capitulation and resignation on the part of the authorities, in response to the social movement, and resignation. This, however, was not possible for many reasons: because the authorities were still too strong and, more importantly, because of the geopolitical situation. Something resembling an attempt to square a circle appeared. The maintenance of a compromise, on the level described in the August 1980 agreement, was no

---

<sup>63</sup> Characteristic, from this point of view, is the statement of Stanislaw Ciosek at the Council of Ministers meeting of 7 December 1981.

<sup>64</sup> This opinion is confirmed by many other interviews, among others, the collection published in *Konspira [Conspire]* (Paris, 1984). Bogdan Boruszewicz: "Frenzy erupted. Thinking in political categories stopped, and mysticism took over -- if you say the word, it will become the body. There was huge social pressure on the leaders." Bogdan Lis: "We were overwhelmed by our own strength...The major weakness of "Solidarity", particularly at the end of 1981, I would see in the brashness of the activists, often at the local factory level...the tone was made by those who could speak loudly and beat the table with their fist at the right moment."

longer possible. The measure of revindication, that had set the limits at the time, had been crossed a long time ago. The authorities had accepted this when they retreated in the face of strike demands. Despite this, social peace was not achieved because the leaders of "Solidarity" were unable to bridle the movement, which certainly did not want to respect the so-called "constitutional provisions of the system," written into the August agreement and later in the "Solidarity" statutes. The authorities, for their part, felt pressed against the wall, from three different sources of pressure: first, helpless in the face of the deteriorating economic and social situation; second, from their own activists, who felt threatened; and third under the pressure, that resembled blackmail, exerted by the USSR and the other Warsaw Pact member states.<sup>65</sup> Poland, in the fall of 1981, was rolling down a slippery slope towards mass disturbances,<sup>66</sup> which threatened to provoke confrontation and a significant number of victims. The consequences were practically unavoidable: intervention by foreign powers.

3. The attempt to institutionalize the conflict, on the basis of legalism, and reaching some kind of *modus vivendi*, became illusory. The last such attempt was the Agreement of the Three, which included the Premier, the Primate, and the "Solidarity" chairman, in November 1981. But it brought no resolution to the crisis since, at this stage, no one sufficiently controlled the situation. Furthermore, the legal basis for the previously reached agreements, and the institutional regulations, were shaky. For a long time, neither side respected the existing laws, in their entirety. The agreement was completely unsuited to the situation at the time, as it neither provided the framework for enabling independent social movements to function, nor regulated strikes and other forms of protest. "Solidarity" notoriously went beyond the law and, *de facto*, questioned its validity. The state authorities, by concluding agreements, or by simply retreating,

---

<sup>65</sup> Pressure on the part of the Soviet Union went as far as an open call for a palace coup (letter of the CPSU Central Committee to the PZPR Central Committee of June 1981), or to military insubordination (duty report of Lieutenant-Colonel Leszek Kolodziej, from 1st OPK, concerning the talks between Colonel Jurii Tetvernikov and General Jan Lazarczyk). Among the materials of the archives of the former GDR, there is the report of the chief of GDR military intelligence, Lieutenant-General Gregori, to the chief of the GDR General Staff, Colonel-General Streletz, about the measures undertaken by GDR intelligence to inspire in Poland something like a military putsch to "save the socialist state". The report was dated 25 September 1981.

<sup>66</sup> Andrzej Micewski, in his book *Kosciol wobec "Solidarnosci" i stanu wojennego [The Church before "Solidarity" and Martial Law]* (Paris, 1987), related Poland's situation in December 1981, as seen from the perspective of Jozef Cardinal Glemp, accordingly: "The Primate later commented, after it was all over, his own position in the following manner:...'Street manifestations and demonstrations were prepared. The government and central party leadership observed these movements with anxiety and prepared different solutions to the unavoidable confrontation'."

accepted this state of affairs. The authoritarian legal order was unofficially suspended by elements on both sides, but new and democratic components did not appear to replace them. The situation, therefore, even before the introduction of Martial Law, can be characterized as being located, at least in part, outside the legal dimension.

### III

In conclusion, the ability of Poland to resist the pressures exerted on it by the Soviet Union and other socialist states, as well as its ability to conduct an independent policy, in large measure, depended on its own internal stability. More precisely: whether its own authorities sufficiently controlled the internal situation. The internal cohesion among the Yugoslav authorities and between them and their society in 1948 allowed Tito to successfully liberate himself from Soviet influence, and subsequently to avoid the armed intervention prepared in 1949 and 1950. Similar circumstances allowed Ceausescu, for many years, to reluctantly carry out Moscow's foreign policy, as well as an independent policy, although with a doctrinaire and oppressive domestic policy.

The collapse of internal stability always constituted an important, if not decisive, condition for Soviet intervention. In the Hungarian and Czechoslovak cases, it was a matter of destabilization provoked by internal political conflicts. In Afghanistan, however, the instability was provoked by Soviet agents. And in Poland, throughout the period from September 1980 to December 1981, elements of strong destabilization, which gradually became more entrenched, existed. It increased the very serious threat of intervention on the part of the USSR.

It is possible that the PRL authorities could have achieved control of the situation by sharing power or, more precisely, by creating a common, but competent and able, government with representatives of the PZPR and the political representatives of "Solidarity". But this was only a theoretical possibility. Neither side was ready for such an undertaking. There was a lack of the necessary minimum of mutual trust: the leaders did not sufficiently control their supporters. The political "wing" of the "Solidarity" movement had not yet been created; the Catholic camp continued its political inertia and limited itself to supporting "Solidarity." There

were also no conditions that could have facilitated quick and confidential negotiations, to achieve the necessary agreements, and then firmly implement them, that would have forced the Kremlin to accept a *fait accompli*. After a time, from spring 1981, I believe, matters went too far to make such a solution even theoretically possible.

In my opinion, the decision to introduce Martial Law became unavoidable due to both the external and internal situation, at the end of 1981. Better solutions were beyond reach. However, worse solutions, especially those that could have created a considerable number of victims, were still quite possible. This does not mean, of course, that they were absolutely certain. Certainty about unrealized options does not exist in history. But judgement has to be based on that which, at the time, and on the basis of the information available then, with the greatest amount of probability, should have been foreseen.

## **Document No. 1**

(Translated from the Polish by Leo Gluchowski)

Czechoslovak Socialist Republic Ministry of National Defense

No. 0037503/29

### **Information [for Gustav Husak] on the Progress and Outcome of the 14th Meeting of the Defense Ministers Committee, 1 and 4 December 1981 in Moscow (Excerpt)**

Between 1 and 4 December 1981, the 14th meeting of the defense ministers committee of the Warsaw Pact member-states took place in Moscow under the chairmanship of Marshal D.F. Ustinov, defense minister of the Soviet Union. The participants at the meetings included all the members of the defense ministers committee, except Army-General Wojciech Jaruzelski, defense minister of the Polish People's Republic (PRL). The Polish People's Army (LWP) delegation was headed by Colonel-General Florian Siwicki, chief of the General Staff and PRL vice-minister of national defense. Each point of the program was discussed in the following order.

#### 1. Analysis of the state and developmental tendencies of the armed forces of the aggressive NATO bloc.

The chief of the Chief Directorate of Information and deputy-chief of the USSR General Staff, Army-General P.I. Ivashutin, in the introductory speech, thoroughly analyzed the current state of the international military and political situation. It was consistent with the appraisal made at the 26th CPSU Congress as well as the congress of fraternal socialist countries.



The LWP Chief of Staff, Col.-Gen. Florian Siwicki, said in his speech, among other things, that the complex socio-economic situation in the country might produce serious disturbance in arms and military procurement for the LWP as well as for the armies of the alliance in the near future. He then spoke about the significance of the army's political morale. He noted that as a result of the situation in the country, fundamental changes were introduced in party and political work. More time had been spent on it. The quality of party and youth meetings had improved, including the intensity of individual discussions. At this time, in party and political work, almost 60% of the [political training] is dedicated to explaining party and government policies. These policies are aimed at bringing the country out from its complicated situation as well as unmasking the enemy activities of those opposed to socialism, especially those of "Solidarity's" extremist circles.

At the end of his speech, Gen. Siwicki said that "at least once a month, at the meetings of the Military Council, an assessment on the state of the military's political morale is conducted, which, at this moment, appears to be satisfactory. Thanks to this effort, the LWP successfully resists the attacks of the class enemy and plays an essential stabilizing role in the life of our country, despite the fact that the conscripts entering its ranks, who found themselves under the negative influence of 'Solidarity', preserved their own ideological and political character."

Gen. Siwicki said that the LWP activists support the party and state apparatus. He considers the defense of the socialist states, the snappy battle with manifestations of counter-revolution, to be his duty, to be his highest goal.

In connection to the situation in the PRL and its development, alarm was sounded during the discussions concerning that point of the program in the speeches by the defense ministers of the USSR, Bulgaria, the GDR as well as the commander of the Combined Armed Forces [of the Warsaw Pact].

2. On the state and development of the air forces.

Report will be given by a representative of the USSR ministry of defense.

3. On the progress of the resolution passed at the 3rd and 6th meetings of the Defense Ministers Committee of the Warsaw Pact member-states on the subject of improving the command system of the allied armies.

Information to be delivered by representatives of the PRL and Romanian ministries of national defense.

4. On the program for the 16th Meeting of the Defense Ministers Committee.

Draft to be presented by the Chief of Staff of the Combined Armed Forces of the Warsaw Pact member-states.

The draft resolutions put forward on this point were unanimously accepted.

At the conference, the draft information text to the press, radio and television concerning the work of the 14th Meeting of the Defense Ministers Committee, was prepared for approval.

Before discussing the matter of the draft text, a supplement concerning the reaction to the situation in the PRL was put forward, which was sent by Comrade Jaruzelski to the defense ministers committee, with a request that it be attached to the text for the mass media with the following content: "The defense ministers committee has expressed its alarm at the development of the situation in the PRL, resulting from the subversive activities of the anti-socialist forces, who are making it more difficult to fulfill the allied obligations of the armed forces of the Warsaw Pact member-states and result in the necessity of taking the suitable steps aimed at ensuring common security in socialist Europe."

Regarding this supplement, the minister of national defense of the Romanian Socialist Republic, Lieutenant-General C.[onstantin] Olteanu, did not express his consent. And he demanded that the text with the contents agreed upon before the meeting of the defense ministers committee be accepted. The remaining defense ministers supported accepting the supplement.

A closed session of the defense ministers committee, including only members, took place next, at which it was proposed that the Romanian defense minister and, if necessary, others who need to do this, consult the above mentioned problem with their own political leadership.

I reported to you, honorable comrade general secretary and president, by telephone on 2 December 1981 on the draft supplement, and I asked for your agreement.

After the consultations had taken place, the defense minister of the Hungarian People's Republic, Army-General L[ajos] Czinege, reported that the Hungarian side had agreed to the supplement only in the event of full agreement by all the defense ministers.

During the evening of 3-4 December 1981, the draft supplement was changed several times and its final text stated: "The defense ministers committee expressed its alarm at the worsening situation in the PRL. The subversive activities of the anti-socialist forces, behind whom stand the aggressive imperialist circles, has a direct impact on the fulfillment of the allied obligations of the armed forces of the Warsaw Pact member-states. Solidarity was expressed with the PZPR's battle, with all Polish patriots against counter-revolution, with the battle to bring the country out of its crisis. As a result, it was underlined that the Polish nation can rely completely on the support of the socialist states."

During the early morning hours, on the last day of the conference, another closed session of the defense ministers committee, including only members, took place, at which it was agreed that the prepared text for the mass media will not be supplemented; but that, apart from this, information will be published in the press by the defense ministers of all the countries, with the exception of the Romanian Socialist Republic. This course of action was agreed upon by all the defense ministers except the Romanian minister. Further details were to be talked over after the protocol was signed.

After the session ended, another session of the defense ministers committee, including only members, took place, where Comrade Ustinov familiarized them with the substance of Comrade Jaruzelski's request. He asked that in the current, very complicated, practically climactic period the defense ministers committee express its displeasure with regard to the situation in the PRL and express its support for the present Polish leadership.

The chief of the LWP General Staff spoke next. He said that the situation in their country had deteriorated greatly, that the Front of National Unity could be organized and that the party was disintegrating. All this was utilized by enemy forces supported by the "West." In this battle the Polish leadership needs support. Dissolving the firefighting schools was a minor success, to which the counter-revolution responded with very sharp demands to isolate further the party and to weaken the state authorities. It wanted to show its strength and to demonstrate that the entire Polish nation was following it. The "Solidarity" leadership turned to the *Sejm* so that it would overturn the decision of the government on dissolving the firefighting schools and show a vote of no confidence in the government. Otherwise, they threatened to introduce strikes, including a general strike. It was also counting on an increase in the wave of discontent with the state of provisions, especially before the Christmas holidays.

For the above mentioned reasons, Comrade Jaruzelski asked that the diversionary claims of the "West", according to which the PRL did not have the support of its allies, be denied. Comrade Siwicki expressed his conviction that supplementing the text for the press would be a cold shower for the counter-revolution and, at the same time, support the battle by the Polish leadership against reaction. He then asserted that the PRL still had enough power to resolve the situation. This was not about any concrete military steps but about moral and political support for the PRL's party and state leadership.

Comrade D.F. Ustinov asserted that the complex situation in the PRL was known and understood by us. That was why such moral support could be helpful and would not indicate the threat to use force. His outlook received the consent of the remaining members of the defense ministers committee, with the exception of the Romanian minister of national defense.

The Hungarian defense minister asserted that he would give his consent to supplement the text for the mass media, but only if all the defense ministers agreed. The Hungarian side did not quite understand who was supposed to be helped, because after closing the firefighting school 20 counter-revolutionaries were arrested and then let go. Comrade Czinege turned to Comrade Siwicki with the following questions: Why does Comrade Jaruzelski not turn to the first and general secretaries of the fraternal parties for the request, since it was a political problem? Why did they not resolve the situation themselves? And who ought to be supported if

they [Polish party] are always on the retreat? He also added that if they [Polish party] resisted even the counter-revolution would behave differently.

Comrade Siwicki said that they had a few scenarios planned against the counter-revolution. There is a scenario to ban strikes, to limit the freedom of citizens, to introduce military courts, and a plan to establish order in the country.

Further in the discussion, Comrade Czinege again asserted that the Hungarian side will give its consent only in the event that all the defense ministers agree. Given that two defense ministers would not give their consent, the discussion to accept the supplement ended.

After the discussion, a sharp exchange of views followed between the defense minister of the Hungarian People's Republic and the chief of the General Staff of the USSR armed forces, Comrade Ogarkov, who asserted that the Hungarian comrades possibly forgot about 1956 and the bloodshed that occurred at the time. Drawing attention to this was seen by Comrade Czinege as an insult to Comrade Kadar and himself, and he voiced his astonishment as to how a Marshal of the Soviet Union could come up with such a declaration. Comrade Ogarkov added that the Soviet comrades did not want the kind of bloodshed in the PRL that had happened in Hungary and that was why they supported every effort to resolve the crisis situation in Poland.

In the talks with Comrades Ustinov and Kulikov, a suggestion emerged about the suitability of raising matters in connection with resolving the situation in the PRL at the meeting of the highest representatives of the communist and worker's parties of the Warsaw Pact member-states.

The 14th Meeting of the Defense Ministers Committee ended with the signing of the protocol.

In his final speech, the chairman of the conference, the USSR minister of national defense, Marshal of the Soviet Union D.F. Ustinov, underlined the significance of the completed meeting for the strengthening of the defense capabilities of the Warsaw Pact member-states. He thanked the members of the Defense Ministers Committee for their participation in the conference and gave the last word to the minister of national defense of the Czechoslovak

Socialist Republic, who will chair the 15th Meeting of the Defense Ministers Committee in 1982 in Prague.

In my speech, I voiced my conviction that the 14th Meeting of the Defense Ministers Committee added to the strengthening of unity, friendship and to a deepening of cooperation between the fraternal armies. I thanked the chairman, Comrade Ustinov, for organizing and leading the conference. I underlined the strong feelings of the Soviet people with our nations and the decisive role of the Soviet Union in our common struggle, measured to ensure the defense of socialism and peace. I assured all the members of the Defense Ministers Committee that during the preparations and execution of the 15th Meeting of the Defense Ministers Committee in 1982 in Prague, we will take advantage of all experiences, most of all from our Soviet friends, for a prosperous conference proceeding.

**Document No. 2**

**(Translated from the Polish by Leo Gluchowski)**

SECRET

Copy no. 1.

**PROPOSALS**

**regarding the introduction of Martial Law for reasons of state security and the underlying consequences of introducing Martial Law.**

1. The PRL [Polish People's Republic] Constitution in article 33, statute 2, states that the "Council of State may introduce Martial Law on part or the entire territory of the Polish People's Republic, if deemed necessary for the protection or the security of the state".
2. It is proposed that the introduction of Martial Law for reasons of state security, which would come about by presenting the appropriate resolutions through the Council of State, be accepted. In that resolution, the scope of territory on which Martial Law is to be binding ought to be emphasized (all the territory of the PRL or, for instance, respective provinces), as well as the day it is to be imposed, and also the extent of the application regulating the statutes of article 237, concerning the universal duty to defend the PRL (for reasons of the following formulation: "At the time Martial Law is in force, it [article 237] shall be used within the scope of obligatory military service, service in civil defense, and service in militarized units, as well as services linked to the enforcement of the codes (statutes concerning the universal duty to defend the PRL) in force in time of war, if the Council of State does not indicate otherwise when introducing Martial Law").

A sample outline draft of the resolutions of the Council of State, concerning the introduction of Martial Law, is presented in attachment No. 1.<sup>67</sup>

3. Due to the lack (among the binding codes of the PRL Constitution, as well as in other statutory acts) of regulations relating to the further consequences of introducing Martial Law, [and] determined to be necessary to guarantee state security under the conditions binding Martial Law, the need arises to take further legal measures restrict the rights of citizens and enlarge the duties of citizens, and also to expand the authority and duties of selected governmental organs, as well as [those of] the state administration and directors of national economic units.

The above, it would appear, should include:

1) in the area of defending the security of the state and public order:

a) the prospects for detaining a citizen [who is] threatening the security of the state or public order for a period of at least 48 hours from the time of detention, without a decision by the court or prosecutor - [but rather] on the basis of administrative decisions by the appropriate organ, such as the Citizens' Militia (that violates the code in article 87, statute 1, of the PRL Constitution, relating to the so-called immunity of the individual);

b) the prospects for introducing restrictions on activities that stir up citizens, with reference to a prohibition of assembly during designated months or during a designated period (such as the introduction of a so-called prohibition against leaving a place of residence [a curfew] and a prohibition on roaming the streets during designated evening hours)–(that violates the code in article 87, statute 1, of the PRL Constitution, relating to the immunity of the individual);

---

<sup>67</sup> Not Printed.



c) the prospects for conducting a search of [someone's] residence beyond the exceptions designated in presently valid statutory codes, including also those on the basis of administrative decisions (that violates the code in article 87, statute 2, of the PRL Constitution, relating to the inviolability of residence);

d) the prospects for introducing censorship on postal delivery and telecommunications correspondence, as well as telephone conversations (that violates the code in article 87, statute 2, of the PRL Constitution, relating to the confidentiality of correspondence);

e) the prospects for introducing expanded supervision and control on the dissemination of every possible means of information and the use of polygraphic devices (that violates the code in article 83 of the PRL Constitution, relating to freedom of speech and press);

f) the prospects for introducing expanded restrictions on activities that incite debates and rallies, marches and manifestations (that violates the code in article 83 of the PRL Constitution, relating to freedoms on this matter);

g) the prospects for suspending the activities of legally existing associations (including trade unions)–(that violates the code in article 84 of the PRL Constitution, relating to the legal guarantee of citizens to organize themselves).

2) in the area of employment rights:

a) the prospects for introducing mandatory work by employees at state-controlled enterprises, hired on the basis of an employee agreement or nomination, appointment, election or co-operative agreement on employment, as well as of designated groups of citizens (such as males between the ages of 18 to 60 years old), who to date have not taken up employment (that violates the code in article 68 of the PRL Constitution, in which there is only mention of the legal right of citizens to employment);

b) the prospects for introducing a ban on strikes (in all forms)–(that violates the decisions contained in the latest so-called social agreement);

c) the prospects for expanding the liability of employees and citizens for violating duties and prohibitions, discussed above under point 3.2a and 3.2b, in the area of criminal code regulations and laws on misdemeanors.

3) in the area of the substantive and procedural criminal code, as well as laws on misdemeanors:

a) the prospects for introducing simpler rules and procedures conducted by the organs of justice and prosecution organs;

b) the prospects for introducing more rigorous criminal liability for activities that reveal themselves to be socially perilous or grow after the introduction of Martial Law for reasons of state security.

4) in the area of economic livelihood and supplying citizens with basic day-to-day commodities:

a) the prospects for introducing mandatory supplies to the state of agricultural produce, restricting the trade and the means of processing that produce;

b) the prospects for introducing general regulations to provision the population with basic day-to-day commodities.

4. Taking into account that the needs of state security, during the time Martial Law is in force, as it appears above in point 3, directly or indirectly violate the so-called rights of citizens,

and concern expanding the duties of citizens, and also foresees expanding the competence and duties of specific governmental organs, as well as the state administration and the directors of national economic units, the need becomes apparent to work out, accept, assume, and to put forward—before or after introducing Martial Law—among the discussed package of statutory codes (in the form of statutes or directives), fundamental principles of law and order formulated in article 8 of the PRL Constitution, according to which all governmental organs and the state administration act on the basis of statutory codes, and that the strict observance of the laws of the Polish People’s Republic is the fundamental duty of every state organ and every citizen.

The above, it would appear, ought to embrace:

1) supplementing the PRL Constitution with a code asserting that at the time Martial Law is in force, as regards the need for the protection or the security of the state, the Council of State may issue directives as valid as statutes that are able to violate the constitutional rights of citizens, as well as to impose specific duties on citizens connected with these needs, and also to set a specific criminal liability for not complying with laws in force at the time Martial Law is in force. Further, [it should] introduce changes in the organization, as well as the range of duties and authority of the leading and territorial governmental organs, of the administration of justice, as well as the state administration and social organizations, as the need arises. Supplementing the PRL Constitution with the above would have the aim of preserving the instrumental principles of the Constitutional codes, and in matters regulated by these codes, in light of article 90 of the Constitution, which in this part states that: “citizens of the Polish People’s Republic has a duty to obey Constitutional codes and statutes...”.

A sample outline draft of this statute is presented in attachment No. 2;

2) a directive safeguarding the security of the state and public order during the time Martial Law is in force, of which a sample outline draft is presented in attachment No. 3;

3) a directive on employment relations at the time Martial Law is in force, of which a sample outline draft is presented in attachment No. 4;

4) a directive on the administration of justice during the time Martial Law is in force, of which a sample outline draft is presented in attachment No. 5;

5) a directive on provisioning the population at the time Martial Law is in force, of which a sample outline draft is presented in attachment No. 6.

The above drafts were prepared on the basis of draft documents concerning Martial Law in order to defend the state, which had been prepared as a result of executing the orders of the Committee for the Defense of the Homeland, as expressed in the directive of 18 March 1976 on the activities pertaining to improving the state defense system for the years 1976-1980. The attached drafts were not subject to harmonization with interested governmental organs and the state administration.

5. It is proposed, with relation to the above mentioned problems in points 2-4, to make decisions regarding the following subjects:

1) the form of the legal act concerning the introduction of Martial Law by the Council of State;

2) defining, at the time Marital Law is in force, the range of compliance with article 237 of the statutes on the universal duty to defend the PRL;

3) the need and prospects for recommending to the PRL Sejm [Parliament] draft statutes on changes to the Constitution of the Polish People's Republic;

4) the need to recommend to the Council of State draft directives, emphasizing the further consequences of introducing Martial Law on the above mentioned subjects.

22 October 1980

**Document No. 3**

(Translated from the Polish by Leo Gluchowski)

[Handwritten]<sup>68</sup>

**PROTOCOL No. 002/81**  
**of the meeting of the Committee for the Defense of the Homeland**  
**on 13 September 1981**

The deliberations were led by the Chairman of the Committee for the Defense of the Homeland, Comrade General Wojciech JARUZELSKI in accordance with the established agenda, as in point 2 of the matter under discussion in the protocol.

The participants at the meeting included Committee members and those invited, [as] detailed in point 3 of the matter under discussion in the protocol.

On points 1-5 of the agenda, i.e. the following matters:

- 1) the current state of security and public order in the State;
- 2) guiding thoughts on the activities of the State at the time Martial Law is in force;
- 3) the state of readiness for activities of selected institutions after the introduction of Martial Law;
- 4) the stage of normative-organizational preparations connected with the introduction of Martial Law, as well as ventures pertaining to militarization and civil defense;

---

<sup>68</sup>The translator would like to thank Kzyszttof Persak (Warsaw) for his help in transcribing the handwritten Polish

5) the safeguarding of Martial Law through propaganda.

The speakers in the discussion included:

Point 1—the current state of security and public order in the State (presented by the Minister of Internal Affairs, Comrade General Cezlaw KISZCZAK):

[Section missing...] specific assignment of the internal affairs department under the conditions of the current socio-political and economic situation in the country, as well as at the time Martial Law is in force.

Point 1 and Point 2—guiding thoughts on State activities at the time Martial Law is in force, (presented by the Chief of the General Staff of the Polish Army, Comrade General Florian SIWICKI):

Comrade Mirosław MILEWSKI—who emphasized the importance of the conclusions arising from the information put forward with regard to points 1 and 2. He pointed out the need to conduct an appraisal on the contingency of introducing Martial Law to examine the effective influence of Martial Law in stabilizing the political situation in the country.

Point 3—the degree of readiness by selected departments to conduct activities after the introduction of Martial Law (presented by the vice-chairman of the Council of Ministers, Comrade Andrzej JEDYNAK):

Comrade Stanisław KANIA—who emphasized that the information presented is not precise on the essential range of problems on the functioning of the national economy at the time Martial Law is in force, mainly with regard to three mutually conditional arrangements: first, the feasibility (reserves) pertaining to the provisioning of the population and the continuation of

---

original.

industrial production; second, the energy system, particularly in assuring communal needs (lighting and heating); third, the consequences as a result of restrictions on international trade.

The Chairman of the Committee for the Defense of the Homeland, Comrade General Wojciech JARUZELSKI—who, in the context of the currently existing large scale stoppages at the purchasing center for agricultural products, indicated that under the circumstances arising from the introduction of Martial Law it is necessary to carry out appraisals concerning the continued delivery of provisions needed by the non-agricultural population.

Comrade Kazimierz BARCIKOWSKI—who proposed considering the purpose of introducing, at the time Martial Law is in force, the so-called tax on provisions in place of the current mandatory deliveries of agricultural products.

Point 4—the state of normative-organizational preparation connected to the introduction of Martial Law, as well as ventures pertaining to militarization and civil defense (discussed by the secretary of the Committee for the Defense of the Homeland, General Tadeusz TUCZAPSKI):

– there was no discussion on this subject.

Point 5—the safeguarding of Martial Law through propaganda (presented by PUWP Central Committee secretary, Comrade Stefan OLSZOWSKI):

Comrade Stanislaw KANIA—who called attention to the need for a comprehensive examination of the prospects pertaining to the guaranteed continuity of work by radio and television, including taking into consideration the reliance on reserves in electric energy at the time Martial Law in force, and also pertaining to organizational-technical problems connected to the possibility of jamming the reception of radio broadcasts transmitted by foreign centers of enemy propaganda.



Chairman of the Committee for the Defense of the Homeland, Comrade General Wojciech JARUZELSKI—who pointed out for the need to select, from all the measures connected with the safeguarding of Martial Law through propaganda, those which should take effect immediately, owing to the evolution of the socio-economic and political situation in the country.

Comrade General Florian SIWICKI—who provided information on the ability to guarantee the supply of radio information through short-wave (with a nation-wide reach) by taking advantage of radio transmitters, such as R-102 and R-110, in case the stationary transmitters of Polish Radio and Television are immobilized.

After discussing matters subject to resolution by the Committee for the Defense of the Homeland, the following persons spoke:

Comrade General Czeslaw KISZCZAK—who emphasized that, among other things, the political opponent aims at confrontation on their own terms, through a varied system of protest actions, voting, and announcing programs, simultaneously resorting to centers directed at the systematic destruction of activities by state administration and PUWP cells. He concluded on the need to intensify party and governmental activities for taking control of the crisis situation in the country's economy, which threatens to intensify present difficulties during the winter period and, among other things, he concluded there was a need to set in motion mechanisms enforcing work discipline, as well as serving to guarantee consistent deliveries by agricultural producers.

Comrade General Czeslaw PIOTROWSKI—who justified the need to militarize the coal mining enterprises, the energy system, and natural gas. He emphasized the economic and political aspects of eventual militarization, as well as the need to take measures in this matter at the right time: principally before Martial Law is introduced.

Comrade Kazimierz BARCIKOWSKI—who pointed out the harmful instances of sluggishness by party organizations in carrying out essential activities. He recommended, in detail, the normative and organizational-planning preparations connected to the introduction of Martial Law (together

with bringing to the provinces normative acts and plans of action) in a way that would allow for the activation of operations connected with it within 36 hours. He also emphasized the need to detail statutes effecting: the optimal choice of the moment to introduce Martial Law, and the foreseen social reaction to the decision concerning the introducing Martial Law; the aims and ways to realize the policies of the party and the government at the time Martial Law is in force, including matters connected with economic reform and strengthening the state and the political structures (together with the introduction of the currently prepared governmental and statutory act; ventures in the sphere of stabilizing the situation in the country and of finding a way out of Martial Law.

Comrade Mirosław MILEWSKI—who underlined that in the present difficult situation, the country’s political authorities and state may act on the principle of relying on the powers of the departments of national defense and internal affairs, whose conceivable erosion would indicate an inclination of social leaning to the benefit of the political opponent. He characterized the essential role of the optimal time factor most optimal from the point of view of introducing Martial Law, and also pointed out the need to firm up immediately apparent preparations connected to that state. These preparations, to shake public opinion, should also indicate that the behavior of the authorities is the result of the continuous implementation of the policy of renewal, and is occasioned by the need to systematically defend the state, [which has been] weakened as a consequence of the destructive activities of the opponent, including the extremist powers inherent in “Solidarity”.

Comrade Stanisław KANIA—who brought attention to the need for maintaining strict secrecy on all discussions at the meeting on matters concerning Martial Law, asserted the need to unravel difficult socio-political and economic problems in the existing critical situation with our own forces and in a way that will ensure the guaranteed well-being of the nation and guard the territory of the Polish People’s Republic, as well as frustrate imperialistic calculations to entangle the USSR and other socialist states by worsening their internal and external conflicts. Sanctioning in general the prepared normative and organizational-planning solutions concerning

Martial Law—labeling it a state of class war, which in the fullness of time cannot fulfill the basic system of social life—he indicated that the aim of its introduction should be to introduce a transformation in “Solidarity” that would lead in the direction of a trade union with socialist characteristics. Emphasizing the need for the continuation of energetic preparations connected to the eventual introduction of Martial Law, he pointed out the primary role of the department of internal affairs in this area, which, besides applying measures to paralyze enemy activities, should also support adopting positive undertones that [would] influence the growth of social awareness in the direction of sanctioning the political line of the party and the government. He noted that the eventuality of introducing Martial Law demands fulfilling a genuine assessment of the ability to guarantee the essential needs of the population at the time Martial Law is in force, above all, in the area of provisions, as well as electricity and heating, keeping in mind that the return to a normal state of affairs will not come in a few days or weeks. He emphasized that the importance of preparations [word unreadable] continuing the functioning of the propaganda system for the period before Martial Law is introduced, as well as during the period it is in force. He remarked that the decision about the eventual introduction of Martial Law would be taken in the fullness of time. However, further preparations in connection with the introduction of Martial Law should be carried out intensely, whereas current readiness plans in this area ought to surpass very realistic preparations. He underlined that preparations connected with Martial Law cannot in anyway be in opposition to the current endeavors of the party and government. The point of departure for an assessment of the present situation should be to proclaim the changes occurring in the public consciousness, which is characterized by growing criticism towards “Solidarity,” while in the party there is increasing will to defend socialism. He pointed out the need to adopt in the near future a “great political offensive” based on the actions of the apparatus and administration, the activities of operational military groups in the field, the proper functioning of laws and authority largely in the direction of liquidating the state of anarchy, making corrections to the situation in the market, finalizing [word unreadable] statutory regulations, new legal norms with respect to trade unions, higher education, and economic reform. He emphasized the need to find the means to secure party organizations for difficult political activities. He noted the need to reexamine the present state of storing arms and

explosive devises (in armories and in production), as well as finding the means to ensure maximum effect for its protection.

Chairman of the Committee for the Defense of the Homeland—who, stressing the highest range of political matters discussed at the meeting of the Committee for the Defense of the Homeland, also characterized the essence and difficulty of the current phase of confrontation with the political opponent, and emphasized that the problems presented at the meeting of the Committee present the clearest review of the situation and allow for precise directions for further actions. He underlined the meaning of the past for a clearer appreciation of the conditions developing in the socio-political and economic situation in the country, as well as our own forces and those of the allies, including the political forces of the opponent. He pointed out the precise meaning and the necessity to settle internal problems with our own forces, at the support for our endeavors by the political and economic activities from the neighboring socialist states, about which enemy elements, those inherent in “Solidarity”, should be thoroughly convinced. He emphasized that the essential strategy of current activities should be the unmasking of the endeavors of enemy forces, appealing to undecided forces on the side of socialism, neutralizing elements in the opposition camp, as well as taking full advantage of public support for the political line of the party and government, including also the kind of measure for eventual political action by the authorities like the introduction of Martial Law. He remarked that the main determining factor, based upon taking a justified decision in the matter of Martial Law, concerns, above all, the passage of time to introduce it, as well as its objective (subject)—it means the kind of choice and subject that under no condition [it] will be assessed as a provocation from the government side, but rather in sufficient measure will explain to society exactly this kind of necessity on the part of the authorities. Assessing the actual state of preparations for the eventual introduction of Martial Law, he generally underlined the correctness of the proposed solution—indicating also the attainment of a higher stage of readiness from the perspective of the departments of national defense and internal affairs, and naturally a relatively lower stage of readiness in the economy and state administration. He called for the confidential continuation on a higher level of advancement of all further indispensable preparations concerning the eventual introduction of

Martial Law, such that indispensable normative and organizational-planning has to be deposited at the level of the Citizens' Militia Provincial Committee. Assessing the propaganda preparations, he indicated a need for their intensification, as well as the confidential adoption of offensive propaganda activities to serve, among other things: the unmasking of the essential objectives of "Solidarity," and revealing its responsibility for the harmful occurrence that came into being last year in social life and the economy of the country; reiterate to society the problems of accounting for the errors of the last period; strengthen the authority of leading cadre and providing it with support to carry out actual assignments. He pointed out the need for a profound unraveling of the tactics of so-called "strike action", as well as to work out appropriate methods and ways of resistance. He recommended undertaking indispensable ventures to block the paralysis and functioning of radio and television; distributing personal weapons to a select group of political and state workers; effective resistance to adventures and violations of mandatory laws; resistance to economic sabotage; [word unreadable] theft, primarily social, especially in Polish State Railways; tightening state frontiers, particularly the coastal borders. He proposed accepting the preparations made to date regarding Martial Law, with advice to guarantee security and secrecy, the indispensability of their intensity of support regarding the findings as a result of the discussion and the current developments in the country, including a recommendation to achieve a permanent readiness for every circumstance for the eventuality of introducing Martial Law the Committee for the Defense of the Homeland accepted the proposals on this subject. Moreover, the Committee for the Defense of the Homeland accepted, put forward by the Secretary of the Committee, a proposal to withdraw from the paramilitary organs the [role of being the] "Decisive establishment defending the Polish People's Republic."

3. Members of the Committee for the Defense of the Homeland: Comrade General Wojciech JARUZELSKI; Comrade Kazimierz BARCIKOWSKI; Comrade Stefan OLSZOWSKI; Comrade Mirosław MILEWSKI; Comrade Andrzej JEDYNAK; Comrade Janusz OBODOWSKI; Comrade General Czesław KISZCZAK; Comrade General Florian SIWICKI; Comrade General Tadeusz TUCZAPSKI.

Person invited: Comrade General Zbigniew NOWAK; Comrade General Michał JANISZEWSKI; Comrade General Bogusław STACHURA; Comrade General Władysław POZOGA; Comrade General Adam KRZYSZTOPORSKI; Comrade General Jerzy SKALSKI; Comrade General Antoni JASINSKI; Comrade General Mieczysław DEBICKI; Comrade General Czesław PIOTROWSKI; Comrade Colonel Bronisław PAWLIKOWSKI; Comrade Colonel Zdzisław MALINA; Comrade Colonel Tadeusz MALICKI; Comrade Walery NAMIOTKIEWICZ.

The First Secretary of the Polish United Workers' Party Central Committee, Stanisław KANIA, took part in the meeting.

SECRETARY OF THE COMMITTEE FOR  
THE DEFENSE OF THE HOMELAND

General Tadeusz TUCZAPSKI

## ABOUT THE AUTHORS

**Andrzej Paczkowski** was born in 1938; historian and author of, among others, *Stanislaw Mikolajczyk. Zarys biografii politycznej* (Warsaw, 1990); and *Pol wieku dziejow Polski 1939-1989* (Warsaw, 1989). He is also the editor of a number of documentary studies covering the postwar period, including: *Aparat bezpieczenstwa w latach 1944-1956*; *Referendum z 30 czerwca 1946*; *Zaciskanie petli. Czechoslowacja 1968*; and *Polska-ZSRR struktura podleglosci. Dokumenty KC WKP (b)*. He is currently Deputy Director of the Institute for Political Studies at the Polish Academy of Sciences (ISP-PAN); member of the Historical Sciences Committee of the Polish Academy of Sciences; and member of the Academic Council of the Archives of the Ministry of Internal Affairs.

**Andrzej Werblan** was born in 1924; a longtime high-level PZPR functionary (member of the Central Committee, 1948-1981; director of various Central Committee departments, 1956-1971; and member of the Politburo, 1980) and former deputy marshal of the *Sejm*, 1971-1980. He is a Professor of History and author of, among others, *Wladyslaw Gomulka. Sekretarz Generalny PPR* (Warsaw, 1988); and *Stalinizm w Polsce* (Warsaw, 1991).

**Leo Gluchowski** is a Research Fellow at the Center for Russian and East European Studies, University of Toronto and ISP-PAN. Since completing his doctoral dissertation at the University of Cambridge in 1992, he has worked extensively in the Polish archives. He is the author (with Edward Nalepa) of *The Soviet-Polish Confrontation of October 1956: The Situation in the Polish Internal Security Corps* (CWIHP Working Paper No. 17, Washington, DC, April 1997). He is currently completing a monograph about the 'Polish October' and is co-editing with Andrzej Paczkowski an English-language documentary history on the Polish security apparatus from 1944-1956.