

January 23, 1981

**Memorandum from John N. McMahon to the
Secretary of State, Defense, and Director of
National Security, 'Polish Ministry of Defense
Drafting Plans to Utilize the Polish Military to
Implement Martial Law'**

Citation:

"Memorandum from John N. McMahon to the Secretary of State, Defense, and Director of National Security, 'Polish Ministry of Defense Drafting Plans to Utilize the Polish Military to Implement Martial Law'", January 23, 1981, Wilson Center Digital Archive, CIA declassification, 2008 <https://digitalarchive.umd.edu/document/165269>

Summary:

Sources reveal the Soviet-supported Polish government intends to declare a state of Martial Law.

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**CENTRAL INTELLIGENCE AGENCY
WASHINGTON, D.C. 20505**

23 January 1981

MEMORANDUM FOR: The Secretary of State
 The Secretary of Defense
 Assistant to the President for
 National Security Affairs
 Director, National Security Agency

FROM : John N. McMahon
 Deputy Director for Operations

SUBJECT : Polish Ministry of Defense Drafting Plans
 to Utilize the Polish Military to
 Implement Martial Law

[Redacted]

1. We have just learned from a reliable source who has excellent access within the Polish military leadership that the highest levels of the Polish Party and Government appear to be resolved to employ directly the Polish military for the settlement of internal unrest. After a conference of the leadership of the Ministry of National Defense and the Ministry of Internal Affairs, on 20 January the commanders of the Polish military districts and of the branches of the armed forces were summoned to the Polish General Staff to work out plans for the use of Polish military forces in the event of a declaration of Martial Law. Such a plan calls for the employment of Polish land forces for blockading of the cities and naval forces for blockading the ports and seacoast. It is Source's understanding that probably in the initial phase, intervention of the Warsaw Pact forces is not contemplated. The office of the Secretary

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of the National Defense Committee of the Polish Ministry of Defense, in cooperation with and under the direction of the Polish General Staff, directed the preparation of the plans for declaring a state of Martial Law. Initially Source assumed that the Warsaw Pact allies would be informed after Martial Law was introduced or during its introduction; however, in view of the recent visit of Marshal Kulikov to Poland during the period 11-15 January 1981 and the fact General Jaruzelski is in constant contact with the Soviet Ministry of Defense, Source now believes that Jaruzelski undoubtedly consulted Marshal Kulikov on the matter of the declaration of a state of Martial Law. Coincident with the drafting of the above-mentioned plans for the declaration of Martial Law, the Main Political Directorate of the Polish Armed Forces is currently conducting an ideological conference of the military leadership cadre.

2. According to the Source, in early January 1981 Soviet General of the Army Afanasiy Fedorovich Shcheglov, senior Soviet Warsaw Pact representative in Poland, criticized the present leadership of the Polish Ministry of Defense for its passive position toward the "Polish counter-revolution" and inquired what the leadership of the Polish Ministry of Defense intended to do about this situation.

3. Based on extensive contacts in the Polish military leadership, Source believes that, despite Soviet support for the current Party and Government leadership and Defense Minister Jaruzelski's team in the military, the Soviets are making considerable efforts to establish a new pro-Soviet team which would be capable of not only stopping but actually reversing the democratizing process persisting in Poland. Within the Polish General Staff there are numerous comments that the Political Bureau is divided as to the ways and means which might lead to solution of the prolonged crisis. Among this group, with much reserve and anxiety, there is mention of Olszowski, who allegedly favors a harder line, as a possible successor to Kania. Source indicated there is also occasional reference to Moczar as a possible successor; however, Source did not provide any additional rationale for this comment. Source stated that there are indications that Minister of Defense Jaruzelski could be replaced

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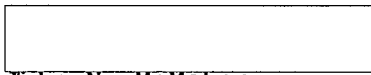
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by the present First Deputy Chief of the General Staff, Division General Tadeusz Hupaliowski. There are also comments that General Molczyk is hesitatingly mentioned as a replacement for Jaruzelski. Source characterized Hupaliowski as originally very critical of the Soviets. However, recently as a trusted confidant of Chief of Staff Siwicki, he was given the job of providing daily briefings to Soviet Army General Shcheglov and Lt. General Kuprianov. The latter sends daily written reports to Moscow on the internal situation in Poland. Source believes that it is possible that these daily contacts with the Soviets won for General Hupaliowski their affection and gratitude as well as their trust. Lately Hupaliowski has criticized the Government for its inability to solve the current crisis situation.

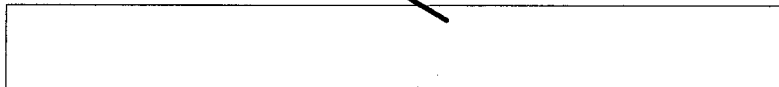
4. Source learned that the invasion of Poland by Warsaw Pact forces, which was initially planned for 8 December 1980, was suspended on 5 December. In addition to the Soviet, Polish, East German and Czech forces that Source has previously indicated were to be part of the invasion, Source has learned that a Bulgarian airborne unit and an unidentified Hungarian unit were also supposed to participate


John N. McMahon

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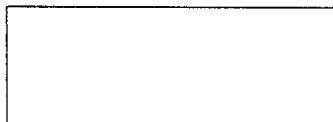
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