

December 7, 1981

**Memorandum from [Redacted] to the Director and
Deputy Director of Central Intelligence, 'Polish
Preparations for Martial Law'**

Citation:

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Summary:

Translated report details the latest available information to the status of martial law in Poland, and argues the government will not instate martial law in their conflict with Solidarnosc and instead opt for political solutions. It outlines the evidence for this with military and government intelligence.

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RELEASE IN PART **CENTRAL INTELLIGENCE AGENCY**
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MEMORANDUM FOR: The Director of Central Intelligence
The Deputy Director of Central Intelligence

FROM: [redacted]
Chief, [redacted] SOVA

SUBJECT: Polish Preparations for Martial Law

1. The attached memorandum provides SOVA's assessment of the most current intelligence concerning Polish preparations for martial law. The continued confrontation with Solidarity has caused the Polish government to prepare extensive plans for the imposition of martial law. These plans are now complete, and certain actions have been taken related to their implementation. Nonetheless, this memorandum concludes that the regime views martial law as risky and continues to pursue political solutions.

2. This is a [redacted] report. For convenience of reference by NFIB agencies, the codeword [redacted] has been assigned to the product of certain extremely sensitive agent sources of CIA's Directorate of Operations. The word [redacted] is classified [redacted] and is to be used only among persons authorized to read and handle this material.

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Attachment:

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Copy # 4 of 8

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[redacted]

SUBJECT: Polish Preparations for Martial Law

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

7 DEC 1981

MEMORANDUM**SUBJECT: Polish Preparation for Martial Law**

1. The Polish government has completed its plans for imposing martial law and some recent activity is consistent with the final preparations that would precede the implementation of such plans. The possibility that the plans would fail, however, still appears to be driving regime moderates to find political solutions to contentious issues. If a decision to implement martial law were taken, we believe that the Soviets would likely begin parallel preparations ranging from increasing security to preparing their own forces to intervene. We have not, however, observed the Soviets taking any specific actions in preparation for a major commitment of force. [redacted]

The Martial Law Program

2. As described by sensitive intelligence sources the Polish plan for martial law has been prepared for use in several scenarios. The full martial law program, which has been approved by Jaruzelski, would involve a large-scale repression of all antigovernment elements. Polish planners see this program as a swift, surprise operation intended to simultaneously eliminate the opposition leadership, and use the threat of force and legal sanctions to subdue general unrest. Reserves would be mobilized and individuals conscripted for unlimited durations, while workers would find their industries "militarized" and themselves under essentially military roles and sanctions. Basic freedoms of internal movement, communications, and otherwise lawful assembly and association

NOTE: This memorandum was prepared in the Office of Soviet Analysis, National Foreign Assessment Center, by [redacted]

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be directed to Chief, [redacted]
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would be severely curtailed or eliminated. Selected individuals would be rounded up for internment during the night immediately preceding the public disclosure of the martial law decree in a named "Operation Spring." [REDACTED]

3. In the period from several days to 24 hours preceding the declaration of martial law, the Ministry of Internal Affairs (MIA) would test unit readiness for special operations, confiscate firearms, prepare to confiscate radio transmitter-receiver sets, and perform a mobilization expansion of MIA units. The Ministry of National Defense (MND) would bring certain units to full strength, move selected units to training areas in the Warsaw Military District, deploy emergency radio and radio-relay systems, and generally prepare to perform physical security functions. [REDACTED]

4. Immediately preceding the declaration of martial law, but after the political decision to impose it, the MIA would relay orders on the execution of the special operation to units (H-16), and then execute it (H-6). At the same time the MND would begin assuming physical security functions (H-6) and sealing off critical areas in Warsaw and other urban centers (H-1). [REDACTED]

5. With the actual declaration of martial law, the MIA would assume control of communications, selected installations, borders, etc., as the MND continued its general function of physical security while preparing to reinforce MIA units if required. In general, those functions of a confrontational nature appear to be the purview of the MIA, with the military playing a supporting role. The other Ministries would be involved in issuing legal directions concerning their areas of responsibility and implementing plans such as the mobilization of certain industries. [REDACTED]

6. Some of the earliest sensitive reporting on martial law indicated that the planners were of two minds with regard to the timing, scope, and nature of the program. On the one hand, arguments were heard that the program should be implemented in stages, or only in specific sectors, to reduce the risk of confrontation. On the other hand, a position was taken, supported by the results of a decisionmaker's exercise in the spring of 1981, that the program's full effectiveness could only be obtained through swift, sudden implementation. [REDACTED]

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7. While the military still profess a clear preference for the sudden, full program, conspicuous measures such as the retention of trained soldiers generally conform to the outline for "creeping" martial law. The recent introduction of military teams into the countryside is neither noted nor implied in existing martial law plans. Nonetheless, by taking this "extraordinary" step, the government is signalling its intent to retain both its authority and legitimacy. The military remains a respected institution within Poland. We have previously estimated that the military could be used with potentially positive results if introduced prior to any outbreak of violence—particularly if their contribution included not just police functions, but positive activities, such as the managing of foodstuffs. This may be what is being attempted at this time, as the government steps up its pressure on Solidarity, while at the same time retaining an ability to suddenly apply the full program. [redacted]

The Evidence--Military

8. Recent reporting indicates an increased emphasis on activity akin to final preparations. Sensitive reports indicate that the Chief of the General Staff of the Polish Armed Forces, General Siwicki, reported to the National Defense Committee on 14 September that military tasks had been assigned, personnel had been selectively retrained, and that unspecified "essential measures" had already been carried out. A General Staff report, obtained by sensitive sources, declares that martial law could be implemented "immediately." [redacted]

9. Sensitive reports indicated the need to augment standing forces prior to the declaration of martial law, but emphasized that this could be accomplished covertly and in stages. The Polish Armed Forces recently announced that they were retaining for two months approximately 53,000 soldiers who had completed their normal military obligation. The retention of trained personnel has long been a basic feature of the martial law program. Such retentions, plus the recent appearance of tents at Polish military and Ministry of Internal Affairs installations suggest a limited manpower augmentation. [redacted]

The planned fall

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scription of 60,000 men apparently was begun on schedule in late October. A major mobilization of the populace, however, need not take place until the application of martial law under the full program. Indeed, mobilization appears to be as much an objective of efforts to control the populace as it is a part of the means of control. [redacted]

10. Another element of military preparations mentioned by Siwicki is the deployment of a "field communications system designed to meet the needs of the state wartime control system" The MND reported in mid-September that "intensive preparations" for martial law included the preparation of the means of communications for directing martial law operations. [redacted]

11. Proper political preparation of the military is seen by the MOD as an important element of a successful martial law plan. [redacted]

The Evidence—Government

12. Sensitive source reporting implies that party/government planning has kept pace with the military. The government has completed all the legal documentation required to implement martial law, and copies of all public decrees and notices have already been printed. A former [redacted] career party official, who recently left Poland, reports that although plans for martial law have been in preparation for at least a year, directives from Warsaw since August have called for renewed emphasis to ensure that they could be quickly carried out. Province plans include an evacuation of key government and party officials and facilities to secure areas where they could be protected by the Army and State Security forces. Meetings were reportedly held in Warsaw under the cover of economic discussions during which the actual topic was martial law plans. [redacted]

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13. State security organs also are being prepared for martial law. The same official reported that the [redacted] Provincial Commandant of the Citizens' Militia received orders in July to prepare detention quarters for 300 people. Key leaders of Solidarity and the opposition groups were to be arrested the moment martial law was decreed. As of late September, that list [redacted] numbered 150 individuals. Each was assigned a security "baby sitter" who was to know the target's every movement so that an arrest order could be carried out immediately. This information is consistent with the sensitive reports of "Operation Spring." [redacted]

The Political Factor

14. The failure of the regime to use its repressive apparatus up to now has not been due to a lack of planning or preparations, but to the realization that no matter how good the plans were, they run serious risk of failing to restore order and leading to some kind of civil war. The factor of surprise would give the regime only a temporary advantage. It seems unlikely that, once made, the early steps in implementation of martial law could be kept secret. As a result, efforts to round up Solidarity activists might only be partially successful. The remainder, with much of the work force, would spontaneously stage sit-in strikes. Attempts to evict them would likely lead to bloodshed and strengthening of the workers' will to resist.

[redacted]

15. The regime also cannot count on the reliability of many of its own forces. Sensitive reporting indicates that the Polish MOD is aware that a significant number of conscripts are already members of Solidarity, with many of the remainder in complete sympathy. The [redacted] Province official reports that the commanders of two Polish divisions (both of which feature in martial law plans) do not feel that their soldiers can be expected to obey orders to use force against civilians. The most these commanders hope for is that their soldiers will obey orders to remain in their barracks or to move to remote bivouac locations to avoid contact with the population and probable occupation forces from the Warsaw Pact. Both reported a sense that their troops might use their weapons against any outside intervention forces. The same official reports that the commandant of the Province Citizen's Militia even has doubts about his most trusted unit—the Motorized Reserve, or "ZOMO"—a highly trained security unit used in crisis situations. Complementing these general indications are the

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letters sent recently to Solidarity by conscripts of the Jelinia Gora and Lublin Provinces. They expressed dissatisfaction with the extension of their service and declared support for Solidarity. They felt that actions against Solidarity were the real reason behind their retention and they rejected such a role. [REDACTED]

16. The Polish party/military leadership is deeply divided on the use of force. Numerous reports from extremely sensitive sources have indicated that senior officials in the Ministries of Defense and Interior have been the strongest proponents of martial law. Those who have argued against martial law will come under increased pressure to give in if economic conditions worsen significantly in the coming months and lead to extensive strike activity. Even then, however, they would probably argue that martial law must be carefully tailored to specific conditions. [REDACTED]

17. Jaruzelski himself is reported by sensitive sources to be in favor of martial law, and he certainly is seeking to limit concessions to Solidarity. Nonetheless, his public behavior still indicates that he prefers a course of political accommodation, and apparently does not consider current conditions propitious for the introduction of martial law. [REDACTED]

The Soviets Role

18. The extent of the Soviets' role in recent events remains unclear. Sensitive reporting indicated that the Soviet leadership was in frequent and direct contact with Jaruzelski prior to the 17 October Party Plenum without the knowledge of Kania. They may, therefore, have had extensive prior knowledge of the Plenum's activities, and could have influenced Jaruzelski. The sudden return of Soviet Marshal Kulikov for one day to Moscow [REDACTED] from East Germany where he was observing an exercise, may indicate that the Soviets were anticipating significant Polish events. [REDACTED]

19. The Soviets have advised the Polish government in its preparations for martial law. In fact, all public decrees on the program have been printed in the Soviet Union. In addition, in July, Soviet General Staff officers visited Warsaw and worked with Polish General Staff officers for a period of time. There is no doubt, therefore, that they are aware of the details of the plan. Although we

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have no direct evidence that the Soviets would be privy to a Polish decision to impose martial law, we believe that would be the case. [REDACTED]

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20. Prior Soviet knowledge of a Polish decision to impose martial law would likely result in some Soviet military preparations, if only to increase security of forces already in Poland. Current reports of Soviet military activities indicate such preparations are not under way. A single uncorroborated HUMINT report, however, indicated that logistic activity which may have been related to Poland was to have begun on 1 November. At that time, the report indicates, the Soviets would place a hold on large portions of their road, rail, air, and sea transportation systems in the areas bordering Poland for a four-week period. There are no positive indications that this has occurred. Earlier in October, a reliable, trained source reported that during the latter part of September, the Soviets had instructed the Czechoslovakian Ministry of Transportation to reserve numbers of rail cars for use by the military. Soviet officials stressed that the action was being taken as a contingency based on possible difficulties with Solidarity and that there was no cause for alarm. Should the reports on the Soviet transport preparations prove accurate, however, they would be a significant indication that the Soviets are anticipating some massive logistic operation, and have an idea of its general time-frame.

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