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PAGE 01 WARSAW 05247 01 OF 08 191528Z
ACTION EUR-00

INFO	LOG-00	ADS-00	INR-07	SS-00	CIAE-00	EB-00	DODE-00
	H-01	MSC-01	IO-19	NSCE-00	NSAE-00	SSO-00	HA-09
	L-03	LAB-04	TRSE-00	PM-10	PA-01	OMB-01	SIL-01
	INRE-00	USIE-00	SP-02	SNP-01	C-01	PRS-01	P-02
	T-01	/065 W					

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O 191510Z APR 89
FM AMEMBASSY WARSAW
TO SECSTATE WASHDC IMMEDIATE 3102
INFO EASTERN EUROPEAN POSTS
AMEMBASSY PARIS
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AMEMBASSY BRUSSELS
AMEMBASSY ROME
AMEMBASSY LONDON
USMISSION GENEVA

C O N F I D E N T I A L SECTION 01 OF 08 WARSAW 05247

BRUSSELS FOR USEC

E.O. 12356: DECL: OADR
TAGS: PGOV, PHUM, ELAB, PL
SUBJECT: ELECTION '89: THE YEAR OF SOLIDARITY

REF: A) WARSAW 4698, B) WARSAW 5154, C) WARSAW 4171

1. CONFIDENTIAL - ENTIRE TEXT.
2. SUMMARY: THE ELECTIONS IN JUNE ARE, FOR THE REGIME, AN UNPREDICTABLE DANGER AND, FOR THE OPPOSITION, AN ENORMOUS OPPORTUNITY. THE AUTHORITIES, HAVING STAKED A GREAT DEAL, ARE HOPING FOR SOME MODEST SUCCESS, BUT THEY
CONFIDENTIAL

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PAGE 02 WARSAW 05247 01 OF 08 191528Z

ARE MORE LIKELY TO MEET TOTAL DEFEAT AND GREAT EMBARRASSMENT. THE PARTY, DESPITE ITS TOUTED SUPERIOR ORGANIZATION, IS VASTLY DISLIKED AND NEARLY INCAPABLE OF PERSUADING AN ELECTORATE THROUGH TRADITIONAL CAMPAIGN TECHNIQUES, WITH WHICH IT HAS HAD NO EXPERIENCE. COMMUNIST-STYLE TRADITIONAL PROPAGANDA WILL NOT BE ENOUGH IN THIS NEW GAME. UNDER THE RULES IMPOSED BY SOLIDARITY AT THE ROUND-TABLE, IT IS DIFFICULT TO SEE HOW THE PARTY'S CORE SUPPORT WILL BE ABLE TO ELECT MANY --

OR ANY -- CANDIDATES TO THE SENATE. APPARENTLY STILL SEEING THE POSSIBLE OUTCOME IN A DIFFERENT WAY, THE REGIME MAY HAVE COMMITTED THE SIN OF MANY CRUMBLING POWER ELITES IN SERIOUSLY UNDERESTIMATING THE STRENGTH AND DEPTH OF ITS OPPOSITION. CONVERSELY

THERE ARE SIGNS THAT SOLIDARITY'S INEXPERIENCE AND DISORGANIZATION ARE BEING OVERCOME; PREPARATIONS FOR FULL AND UNIFIED SOLIDARITY PARTICIPATION IN THE ELECTIONS ARE WELL ADVANCED. AS A CORE OF ACTIVITY - AND VOTERS -- THE NEWLY-LEGALIZED UNION WILL SIGN UP SEVERAL MILLION MEMBERS BY ELECTION DAY. ALTHOUGH THE PUBLIC MOOD IS FAR FROM EUPHORIC, BOTH AWARENESS AND SOME ENTHUSIASM ARE GROWING. BY ELECTION TIME, THE APPEAL OF A GENUINELY FREE ELECTORAL PROCESS WILL BE COMPELLING AND THE TURNOUT WILL BE LARGE. THE LIKELIHOOD OF A SOLIDARITY SWEEP IN THE SENATE ELECTIONS WILL CREATE THE CONDITIONS FOR A LEGISLATIVE AND CONSTITUTIONAL CRISIS. THIS, IN TURN, WILL FORCE A RESOLUTION OF THE PROFOUND ISSUES OF POWER SHARING AND POLAND'S POLITICAL FUTURE; EXACTLY THE OBJECTIVE OF THOSE WHO FORCED THE REGIME TO ACCEPT THIS EXTRAORDINARY ELECTION. END SUMMARY.
CONFIDENTIAL

CONFIDENTIAL

PAGE 03 WARSAW 05247 01 OF 08 191528Z

3. AMONG THE UNPRECEDENTED PRODUCTS OF THE ROUND-TABLE, THE MOST HUGELY PREGNANT OF THEM ALL IS THE LARGELY FREE PARLIAMENTARY ELECTIONS TO BE DELIVERED IN SIX WEEKS TIME. THE IMPORTANCE OF THIS EVENT EVEN OVERSHADOWS THE RELEGALIZATION OF SOLIDARITY, WHICH HAS FOR YEARS BEEN THE PRE-EMINENT OBJECTIVE OF BOTH THE POLISH OPPOSITION AND U.S. POLICY. FOR THE FIRST TIME IN THE LIVES OF NEARLY ALL POLES, THEY WILL HAVE AN OPPORTUNITY TO ENGAGE IN A GENUINELY DEMOCRATIC ELECTORAL PROCESS, CHOOSING FREELY FROM AMONG CANDIDATES OF WIDELY DIVERGENT VIEWS. THEY WILL CREATE A REAL REPRESENTATIVE PARLIAMENTARY BODY WITH FULL LEGISLATIVE POWERS. THROUGH THEIR ELECTED REPRESENTATIVES, THE POLISH PEOPLE WILL PLAY AN ACTIVE AND ESSENTIAL ROLE IN THE FORMATION OF NEARLY ALL GOVERNMENTAL POLICIES, INCLUDING ECONOMIC MANAGEMENT OF THE COUNTRY. ALL OF THIS IS AT STAKE ON JUNE 4 AND 18. EVEN THE HIGHEST PARTY AUTHORITIES SEE THE EVENT AS UNPREDICTABLE AND DANGEROUS; A CRAP SHOOT WITH AN ENORMOUS WAGER. THAT THEY COULD HAVE ACCEPTED SUCH UNCERTAINTY, SUCH GREAT RISK, REVEALS HOW FRIGHTENING THE ALTERNATIVE POSSIBLE DEVELOPMENTS MUST HAVE SEEMED TO THIS EMBATTLED REGIME.

CONFIDENTIAL

Date Printed: 08/26/1997

DOC_NUMBER: 89WARSAW05247

CHANNEL: n/a

559

4. IN AN APRIL 14 CONVERSATION, POLITBURO MEMBER JANUSZ REYKOWSKI, CO-CHAIRMAN OF THE ROUND-TABLE'S POLITICAL GROUP AND PERHAPS THE REGIME'S PREMIER INTELLECTUAL, DESCRIBED THE UNCERTAINTY -- AND THE RISKS -- THIS WAY: THERE ARE TWO OPPOSING "VECTORS" OPERATING IN THE "CONFRONTATIONAL" SENATE ELECTIONS; BOTH ARE NEGATIVE FORCES. ONE

CONFIDENTIAL

CONFIDENTIAL

PAGE 04

WARSAW 05247 01 OF 08 191528Z

CONFIDENTIAL

CONFIDENTIAL

Date Printed: 08/26/1997

DOC_NUMBER: 89WARSAW05247

CHANNEL: n/a

559

NNNN

CONFIDENTIAL

PAGE 01 WARSAW 05247 02 OF 08 191529Z
ACTION EUR-00

INFO	LOG-00	ADS-00	INR-07	SS-00	CIAE-00	EB-00	DODE-00
	H-01	MSC-01	IO-19	NSCE-00	NSAE-00	SSO-00	HA-09
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C O N F I D E N T I A L SECTION 02 OF 08 WARSAW 05247

BRUSSELS FOR USEC

E.O. 12356: DECL: OADR
TAGS: PGOV, PHUM, ELAB, PL
SUBJECT: ELECTION '89: THE YEAR OF SOLIDARITY

IS THE OPPOSITION'S DISORGANIZATION, UNPREPAREDNESS,
AND LACK OF EXPERIENCE, ALL OF WHICH MAKES ENTIRELY
EFFECTIVE ELECTORAL PARTICIPATION UNLIKELY.
THE OTHER VECTOR IS THE DEEP-SEATED DISTRUST,
DISLIKE, "EVEN HATRED" MOST POLES FEEL FOR THE
LEADERS OF A FAILED SYSTEM. REYKOWSKI FOUND IT
COMPLETELY IMPOSSIBLE TO SPECULATE HOW THESE
OPPOSING VECTORS WOULD DETERMINE THE FINAL
RESULT OF THE FREE SENATE ELECTIONS. HE SAID
THERE WAS NO EXPERIENCE IN POLAND OR ELSEWHERE
CONFIDENTIAL

CONFIDENTIAL

PAGE 02 WARSAW 05247 02 OF 08 191529Z

THAT COULD PROVIDE ANY DATA WHATSOEVER TO INDICATE
HOW THESE FACTORS WOULD BE REFLECTED IN ACTUAL
VOTES. FURTHER, THE ACTUAL PROCESS OF FREE
ELECTIONS AND THE NEW INSTITUTION TO WHICH

CANDIDATES WILL BE ELECTED ARE UNPRECEDENTED IN PEOPLE'S POLAND. THERE IS NO BASIS ON WHICH ONE CAN PREDICT VOTER ATTITUDES TOWARD EITHER THE CANDIDATES OR THE PROCESS, AND NO WAY TO PREDICT VOTER TURNOUT.

5. COMBINED WITH THE UNPREDICTABILITY OF THE ELECTIONS IS REYKOWSKI'S ASSESSMENT OF THE STAKES. THE PRO-REFORM FORCES WITHIN THE PARTY ITSELF HAVE RISKED PERHAPS EVERYTHING AND ARE HOPING FOR SOME MODERATE SUCCESS AT THE POLLS. A NEAR-COMPLETE OPPOSITION VICTORY, DECLARED REYKOWSKI, WOULD BE "A COMPLETE DISASTER." THE CONSERVATIVE OPPOSITION WITHIN THE PARTY IS BEING HELD AT ARMS LENGTH, BUT WITH DIFFICULTY. A CRUSHING VOTE OF NO CONFIDENCE IN THE POLLS, COMBINED WITH A NEW, POWERFUL POLITICAL INSTITUTION ENTIRELY DOMINATED BY THE OPPOSITION, WOULD MAKE THE PARTY BASE FEEL MORE ACUTELY THE MORTAL DANGER FACING IT. REYKOWSKI MADE IT CLEAR THAT THE REFORM EXPERIMENT -- AND PRESUMABLY THE REFORMERS -- MAY NOT SURVIVE THE COUNTER-ATTACK SUCH A THREAT WOULD ENGENDER.

6. IN VIEW OF REYKOWSKI'S CONTENTION THAT THE WAGER REALLY IS THAT GREAT, WE MUST MAKE SOME EFFORT TO ASSESS THE OPPOSING "VECTORS" AND OTHER FACTORS THAT WILL DETERMINE THE FIRST ROLL OF THESE NEW DICE, AND TO GUESS WHAT REALLY

CONFIDENTIAL

PAGE 03 WARSAW 05247 02 OF 08 191529Z

IS AT STAKE.

THE PARTY'S POSITION

7. IT IS INDISPÚTABLE THAT THE PARTY ENJOYS LITTLE POPULAR SUPPORT AFTER 40 YEARS OF DISASTEROUS MISMANAGEMENT OF THE COUNTRY AND ABUSE OF ITS CITIZENS. AN OPPOSITION INTELLECTUAL ONCE TOLD US THAT AMERICANS WERE PERHAPS INCAPABLE OF TRULY COMPREHENDING THE ENORMOUS GULF BETWEEN THE RULERS OF POLAND AND THE PEOPLE. OUR POLITICAL HERITAGE INCLUDES ASSUMED NORMS IN THE RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN GOVERNORS AND THE GOVERNED; THERE ARE AUTHENTICITY, RESPONSIVENESS, AND SHARED BASIC VALUES THAT SIMPLY ARE ABSENT IN POLAND. THE OPPOSITIONIST MAINTAINED THAT THE PROFOUND ADVERSARIAL RELATIONSHIP IN POLISH POLITICAL LIFE WAS INCOMPREHENSIBLE TO THOSE OF A DEMOCRATIC CULTURE. IF SO, THEN THE

ABSENCE OF POPULAR SUPPORT FOR THE PARTY IS EVEN MORE PROFOUND THAN WE SUPPOSE, AND THE PARTY'S ABILITY TO PERSUADE, THROUGH AN ELECTION CAMPAIGN, WILL BE MINIMAL INDEED.

8. THERE ARE SOME, HOWEVER, ON THE FAR SIDE OF THE BARRICADES ALREADY. THERE ARE SLIGHTLY MORE THAN TWO MILLION PARTY MEMBERS IN POLAND, OR ABOUT TEN PERCENT OF THE VOTING POPULATION. IN ADDITION, THERE IS AN ILL-DEFINED NUMBER OF PEOPLE WHOSE STATUS, ECONOMIC WELFARE, OR PERCEIVED INTEREST IN STABILITY WILL PERSUADE THEM TO SUPPORT THE PRESENT REGIME. MANY OBSERVERS,

CONFIDENTIAL

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CONFIDENTIAL

PAGE 01 WARSAW 05247 03 OF 08 191530Z
ACTION EUR-00

INFO	LOG-00	ADS-00	INR-07	SS-00	CIAE-00	EB-00	DODE-00
	H-01	MSC-01	IO-19	NSCE-00	NSAE-00	SSO-00	HA-09
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C O N F I D E N T I A L SECTION 03 OF 08 WARSAW 05247

BRUSSELS FOR USEC

E.O. 12356: DECL: OADR
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SUBJECT: ELECTION '89:6 THE YEAR OF SOLIDARITY

BOTH OFFICIAL AND INDEPENDENT, HAVE LONG MAINTAINED THAT THE TOTAL SUPPORT FOR THE PARTY COULD AMOUNT TO 20 TO 25 PERCENT OF THE VOTING POPULATION. HOWEVER, THIS PERCENTAGE, WHICH IS PROBABLY HIGH, IS WIDELY DISPERSED THROUGHOUT THE COUNTRY, WITH NO REAL POCKETS OF STRONGER SUPPORT. THE TRADITIONAL PARTY "STRONGHOLDS" OF SILESIA, FOR INSTANCE, ARE ALSO STRONGHOLDS OF OPPOSITION ACTIVITY. THUS, SILESIA IS CHARACTERIZED BY POLITICIZATION AND POLARIZA-
CONFIDENTIAL

CONFIDENTIAL

PAGE 02 WARSAW 05247 03 OF 08 191530Z

TION, RATHER THAN SIMPLY A CENTER OF GREATER PARTY SUPPORT. THERE IS NO VOIVODESHIP IN WHICH THE PERCENTAGE OF PARTY SUPPORTERS IS SIGNIFICANTLY HIGHER THAN THE ASSUMED NATIONAL AVERAGE.

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9. IN A DIFFERENT KIND OF ELECTORAL SYSTEM, 25 PERCENT OF THE ELECTORATE MIGHT BE EXPECTED TO ELECT 25 PERCENT OF THE SENATORS. BUT, UNDER RULES FORCED BY SOLIDARITY ON THE RELUCTANT, BUT ULTIMATELY ACCOMMODATING REGIME AT THE ROUND-TABLE, IT IS DIFFICULT TO SEE HOW THE 25 PERCENT -- OR EVEN A BIT MORE -- COULD SUCCEED IN ELECTING ANY PARTY CANDIDATE TO THE SENATE. FROM THE MOMENT THE SENATE IDEA WAS INTRODUCED INTO THE ROUND-TABLE DISCUSSIONS, THE REGIME MOVED STEADILY BACKWARDS IN NEGOTIATIONS, GIVING UP VIRTUALLY ALL ELECTORAL ADVANTAGES. MOST IMPORTANTLY, THEY AGREED TO TWO-STAGE ELECTIONS.

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10. IN THE ORIGINAL PROPOSAL, THE WINNER IN EACH PROVINCE'S SENATE ELECTION -- WIDELY EXPECTED TO BE THE OPPOSITION CANDIDATE IN NEARLY EVERY CASE -- WOULD WIN ONE SEAT, AND THE RUNNER-UP WOULD WIN THE SECOND. IT WAS ASSUMED THAT, IN AT LEAST SOME CASES, THE RUNNER-UP WOULD BE A PARTY CANDIDATE WITH PERHAPS 20-30 PERCENT OF THE VOTE. GIVING THIS SCHEME UP, HOWEVER, THE REGIME WAS FORCED TO ACCEPT A SECOND ROUND OF ELECTIONS IN CASES WHERE BOTH SEATS IN A PROVINCE WERE NOT FILLED BY CANDIDATES WITH 50 PERCENT OF THE VOTE (EACH VOTER
CONFIDENTIAL

CONFIDENTIAL

CONFIDENTIAL

Date Printed: 08/26/1997

DOC_NUMBER: 89WARSAW05247

CHANNEL: n/a

559

PAGE 03 WARSAW 05247 03 OF 08 191530Z

GETS TWO VOTES FOR THE SENATE). IT IS VERY NEARLY INCONCEIVABLE THAT ANY PARTY CANDIDATE WILL OBTAIN 50 PERCENT OF THE VOTE IN THE FIRST ROUND. THUS, EVERYONE ELECTED IN THAT ROUND WILL BE EITHER SOLIDARITY OR INDEPENDENT CANDIDATES. IN THE SECOND ROUND, WHERE ONLY A PLURALITY IS REQUIRED TO ELECT, WE CAN ASSUME THAT THE PARTY CANDIDATE, IF HE MAKES IT THAT FAR, WILL BE RUNNING AGAINST THE SECOND MOST POPULAR OPPOSITION CANDIDATE. THE OPPOSITION VOTE WILL NOT BE DIVIDED, BECAUSE THE FIRST ELECTION WILL HAVE ELIMINATED OTHER INDEPENDENT CANDIDATES. (THE ALTERNATIVE IS THAT THE PARTY CANDIDATE WILL NOT HAVE MADE IT INTO THE SECOND ROUND, WHICH WILL THEN PRESENT A CHOICE BETWEEN THE SECOND AND THIRD MOST POPULAR OPPOSITION OR INDEPENDENT CANDIDATES.) IN THIS SCENARIO, EVEN THE MOST OPTIMISTIC PARTY OBSERVERS SHOULD FIND IT DIFFICULT TO EXPECT A PARTY VICTORY IN MORE THAN A FEW CASES, IF AT ALL. THE POINT OF THIS EXPLANATION IS THAT THE OBJECTIVE MECHANICS OF THE SENATE ELECTION, COMBINED WITH THE PARTY'S ACKNOWLEDGED UNPOPULARITY, THREATEN TO PRODUCE A SERIOUS DEFEAT FOR POSSIBLY ALL PARTY CANDIDATES.

11. SEARCHING FOR AN EXPLANATION OF WHY THE PARTY WOULD HAVE PLACED ITSELF IN SUCH A THREATENED POSITION, WE MUST NOT EXCLUDE THE POSSIBILITY OF VAST MISCALCULATION. AFTER ALL, THE REGIME HAS HAD LITTLE EXPERIENCE IN ASSESSING ELECTORAL MOODS AND VOTER RESPONSES, JUST AS IT HAD LITTLE EXPERIENCE IN JUDGING THE POLITICAL IMPACT OF PUTTING LECH WALESIA ON

CONFIDENTIAL

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PAGE 01 WARSAW 05247 04 OF 08 191530Z

CONFIDENTIAL

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559

ACTION EUR-00

INFO	LOG-00	ADS-00	INR-07	SS-00	CIAE-00	EB-00	DODE-00
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 SUBJECT: ELECTION '89: THE YEAR OF SOLIDARITY

NATIONAL TELEVISION IN FRONT OF 28 MILLION
 POLES. THIS EVENT, WHICH OCCURRED ON
 NOVEMBER 30, ESSENTIALLY LED TO THE CURRENT
 SITUATION IN POLAND, WITH A RELEGALIZED SOLID-
 ARITY AND A THREATENED OPPOSITION VICTORY IN
 A FREE ELECTION. JUST AS REYKOWSKI SPOKE
 ABOUT A MASSIVE OPPOSITION VICTORY BEING A
 "COMPLETE DISASTER" FOR PARTY REFORMERS, LOWER
 LEVEL PARTY MEMBERS ALSO APPEAR TO BE COUNTING
 ON SOMETHING SHORT OF DISASTER. ONE LOCAL
 CONFIDENTIAL

CONFIDENTIAL

PAGE 02 WARSAW 05247 04 OF 08 191530Z

SEJM CANDIDATE SUGGESTED IN ALL SERIOUSNESS
 THAT THE PARTY MIGHT WIN 40 PERCENT OF THE
 SENATE BECAUSE PEOPLE WOULD VOTE FOR STABILITY
 IN THE RURAL PROVINCES. WE MUST CONCLUDE THAT
 THIS POWER ELITE, LIKE OTHERS BEFORE IT IN
 OTHER COUNTRIES, HAS VASTLY UNDERESTIMATED
 THE STRENGTH OF ITS OPPOSITION.

12. ONE FACTOR THAT IS OFTEN MENTIONED IN THE
 PARTY'S FAVOR IS THE FACT THAT IT IS WELL
 ORGANIZED THROUGHOUT THE COUNTRY AND ITS SUP-
 PORTERS, ALTHOUGH RELATIVELY FEW, CAN BE EASILY
 MOBILIZED; THEY WILL ALL CAMPAIGN AND VOTE.

EVEN SOME OPPOSITIONISTS (INCLUDING WOJCIECH LAMENTOWICZ, WARSAW4295) CLAIM THAT THIS ORGANIZATIONAL ADVANTAGE CAN BE TELLING IF USED PROPERLY. HOWEVER, ACKNOWLEDGING THAT THE PARTY IS WELL ORGANIZED, WE MUST ASK, ORGANIZED FOR WHAT? FOR ELECTION CAMPAIGNING? FOR PERSUADING A VASTLY CYNICAL PUBLIC THAT THE PARTY CANDIDATES SHOULD BE GIVEN A MANDATE TO EXERCISE THE PARTY'S CONTROL OVER THE COUNTRY FOR SEVERAL MORE YEARS? CERTAINLY THIS IS NOT THE CASE. THE PARTY IS ORGANIZED FOR MORE INSIDIOUS FORMS OF POLITICAL CONTROL, BUT THE PROPAGANDISTIC OBFUSCATION OF ITS NATURE AND METHODS HASN'T FOOLED ANYONE FOR MANY - YEARS. A NEWLY-FREE ELECTORATE WILL NOT BE TAKEN IN BY THIS FALSE COVER, NO MATTER HOW NEATLY ORGANIZED ITS MANY LAYERS. IN THIS CASE, IT IS NOT THAT THE EMPEROR HAS NO CLOTHES; IT IS THAT BENEATH THE RAIMENT, THERE IS NO EMPEROR.

CONFIDENTIAL

CONFIDENTIAL

PAGE 03 WARSAW 05247 04 OF 08 191530Z

SOLIDARITY'S POSITION

13. THE OPPOSITE "VECTOR" IN REYKOWSKI'S EXPLANATION IS THE OPPOSITION'S INEXPERIENCE, DISORGANIZATION AND LACK OF TIME. AT THE OUTSET OF THIS EXTRAORDINARY ELECTORAL EXERCISE, THIS ARGUMENT WAS PERSUASIVE, COMPELLED BY THE SEEMINGLY OVERWHELMING TASKS THAT CONFRONTED THE OPPOSITION AND REPEATEDLY CONFIRMED BY SOLIDARITY'S OWN PUBLIC STATEMENTS AND PRIVATE HAND-WRINGING. THE IMAGE OF A DISORGANIZED AND FRACTIONATED SOLIDARITY WAS ENHANCED BY THE APRIL 9 MEETING OF THE CITIZENS' COMMITTEE (REFTEL), WHICH WAS MARKED BY A FRACTIOUS DEBATE OVER THE FLAWED PROCESS OF SELECTING CANDIDATES. SUBSEQUENTLY, AS THE COMMITTEE SOUGHT TO FORM PROVINCIAL COMMITTEES TO GUIDE THE CANDIDATE SELECTION PROCESS, MULTIPLE COMMITTEES FORMED SPONTANEOUSLY IN SOME PROVINCES, SUGGESTING THAT MULTIPLE OPPOSITION CANDIDATES WILL BE COMPETING IN SOME DISTRICTS, SPLITTING THE OPPOSITION VOTE AND WEAKENING ITS ELECTION PROSPECTS.

14. NOW, TWO WEEKS AFTER THE SIGNING OF THE ROUND-TABLE AGREEMENTS, WE ARE STRUCK NOT BY THE DISPUTES OVER METHODS, WHICH REMAIN, BUT

CONFIDENTIAL

Date Printed: 08/26/1997

DOC_NUMBER: 89WARSAW05247

CHANNEL: n/a

559

BY THE DETERMINED AND COHESIVE EFFORTS SOLIDARITY IS MAKING TO PRESENT A UNITED FRONT. ONCE AGAIN, LECH WALESZA'S ULTIMATELY PRACTICAL AND APPEALING ARGUMENT IS CUTTING THROUGH THE DISPUTES AND

CONFIDENTIAL

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PAGE 01 WARSAW 05247 05 OF 08 191531Z
ACTION EUR-00

INFO	LOG-00	ADS-00	INR-07	SS-00	CIAE-00	EB-00	DODE-00
	H-01	MSC-01	IO-19	NSCE-00	NSAE-00	SSO-00	HA-09
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C O N F I D E N T I A L SECTION 05 OF 08 WARSAW 05247

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PERSONAL RIVALRIES: HE "LOVES VICTORY," WHICH CAN ONLY BE ATTAINED BY CONFRONTING THE ENORMOUS TASKS WITH UNITY -- WITH "SOLIDARITY." IN REFTTEL, WE DESCRIBE THE PROCESS WHEREBY THE WARSAW-REGION OPPOSITION HAS ORGANIZED ITSELF TO MEET THE ELECTORAL CHALLENGE, PRESENTING

CONFIDENTIAL

Date Printed: 08/26/1997

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CHANNEL: n/a

559

CANDIDATES WITH OVERWHELMING AUTHORITY AND POPULARITY. IN COMING DAYS AND WEEKS WE WILL BE REPORTING ON CORRESPONDING ACTIVITIES IN OTHER REGIONS.
CONFIDENTIAL

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PAGE 02 WARSAW 05247 05 OF 08 191531Z

15. AN OPPOSITION JOURNALIST AND INTELLECTUAL, KAZIMIERZ DZIEWANOWSKI, EXPLAINED FOR US RECENTLY THAT POLES, ALTHOUGH TENDING TOWARD MULTIPLE, DIVERSE, CONFLICTING POLITICAL OPINIONS, NEVERTHELESS ARE CAPABLE OF PRESENTING A UNITED FRONT WHEN FACED WITH ADVERSITY OR OPPORTUNITY. AS EVIDENCE, HE POINTS TO THE CHURCH, A COMMON GROUND ON WHICH GENERATIONS OF POLES HAVE FOUND TACTICAL ADVANTAGE IN THE ESSENTIAL UNITY OF THE CHURCH'S VIEWS. MORE TO THE POINT, SOLIDARITY ITSELF -- THE COMMON LANGUAGE OF POLITICAL OPPOSITION -- HAS UNITED A WIDE SPECTRUM OF POLITICAL ACTIVISTS AND PROVIDED A SINGLE, BROAD CHANNEL FOR POLITICAL EXPRESSION. NOW, AT THE MOMENT OF VICTORY, DZIEWANOWSKI BELIEVES, THIS UNITY WILL NOT BE ABANDONED IN FAVOR OF MORE PAROCHIAL INTERESTS, NO MATTER HOW STRONGLY FELT. HE IS CONVINCED THAT THE IMPREMATUR OF WALESZA ON THE SINGLE LIST OF SOLIDARITY CANDIDATES WILL BE ENOUGH, ALL BY ITSELF, TO ASSURE OVERWHELMING SUCCESS, NOT BECAUSE WALESZA'S JUDGEMENT IS UNIVERSALLY ACCEPTED, BUT BECAUSE THERE IS CLEAR POLITICAL ADVANTAGE IN UNITY AT THIS IMPORTANT MOMENT.

16. IT SHOULD BE NOTED, HOWEVER, THAT SOLIDARITY HAS NOT CEASED PUTTING A PESSIMISTIC CAST ON ITS ELECTORAL PROSPECTS. AS RECENTLY AS APRIL 17, SOLIDARITY SPOKESMAN JANUSZ ONYSZKIEWICZ TOLD THE PRESS THAT SOLIDARITY WAS NOT PREPARED TO MEET THE ENORMOUS CHALLENGES. WE SUSPECT THAT THIS WILL REMAIN A CONSTANT
CONFIDENTIAL

CONFIDENTIAL

PAGE 03 WARSAW 05247 05 OF 08 191531Z

THEME IN PUBLIC, EVEN WHILE ACTIVITY AND ENTHUSIASM GROW IN PRIVATE. SOLIDARITY DOES NOT WANT TO APPEAR OVERCONFIDENT OR THREATENING. SOME OBSERVERS, FOR A TIME, MAY REMAIN MISLED BY SOLIDARITY'S TACTICS OF SELF-DEPRECIATION.

PUBLIC MOOD

17. IT IS TRUE THAT, THROUGHOUT THE AGONIZINGLY PROTRACTED ROUND-TABLE DISCUSSIONS, THE PUBLIC'S ATTENTION HAS WANDERED. IT IS DIFFICULT TO GET INSIDE THE COLLECTIVE CONSCIOUSNESS OF THE POLISH ELECTORATE, BUT OUR SENSE IS THAT RELATIVELY FEW POLES UNDERSTOOD WHAT HAD BEEN ACCOMPLISHED AT THE ROUND-TABLE, AT LEAST IN THE DAYS FOLLOWING ITS CONCLUSION. SINCE THEN, HOWEVER, THE AGREEMENTS HAVE BEEN PUBLISHED, DISCUSSION IN THE MEDIA AND ELSEWHERE HAS PROVIDED DETAILED INFORMATION, AND THE GENERAL LEVEL OF KNOWLEDGE AND INTEREST IS RISING AND WILL CONTINUE TO DO SO. WE HAVE SPOKEN WITH PEOPLE WHO HAVE PARTICIPATED IN FACTORY AND CHURCH MEETINGS FOLLOWING THE SIGNING OF THE ACCORDS, AND THEY REPORT A GROWING ENTHUSIASM. A MAJOR BOOST TO THIS PROCESS TOOK PLACE ON APRIL 17 WITH THE REGISTRATION OF SOLIDARITY. AFTER A SEVEN-YEAR STRUGGLE, THE UNION IS ABOUT TO BECOME THE MASS ORGANIZATION IT ONCE WAS, AND HAS THE EXPERIENCE AND MACHINERY TO ACCOMPLISH IT QUICKLY. WALESZA HAS ALREADY CALLED UPON UNION ORGANIZERS TO ACCUMULATE MEMBERS IN ALL OF POLAND'S ENTERPRISES. ALTHOUGH

CONFIDENTIAL

CONFIDENTIAL

PAGE 04

WARSAW 05247 05 OF 08 191531Z

CONFIDENTIAL

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CONFIDENTIAL

PAGE 01 WARSAW 05247 06 OF 08 191532Z
ACTION EUR-00

INFO	LOG-00	ADS-00	ENR-07	SS-00	CIAE-00	EB-00	DODE-00
	H-01	MSC-01	IO-19	NSCE-00	NSAE-00	SSO-00	HA-09
	L-03	LAB-04	TRSE-00	PM-10	PA-01	OMB-01	SIL-01
	INRE-00	USIE-00	SP-02	SNP-01	C-01	PRS-01	P-02
	T-01	/065 W					

-----050006 / 191556Z /41

O 191510Z APR 89
FM AMEMBASSY WARSAW
TO SECSTATE WASHDC IMMEDIATE 3107
INFO EASTERN EUROPEAN POSTS
AMEMBASSY PARIS
AMEMBASSY VIENNA
AMEMBASSY BRUSSELS
AMEMBASSY ROME
AMEMBASSY LONDON
USMISSION GENEVA

C O N F I D E N T I A L SECTION 06 OF 08 WARSAW 05247

BRUSSELS FOR USEC

E.O. 12356: DECL: OADR
TAGS: PGOV, PHUM, ELAB, PL
SUBJECT: ELECTION '89: THE YEAR OF SOLIDARITY

CONFIDENTIAL

Date Printed: 08/26/1997

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CHANNEL: n/a

559

FEW EXPECT THE UNION TO GATHER ITS EARLIER MEMBERSHIP, SOME TEN MILLION STRONG, EVERYONE ASSUMES THAT THE UNION QUICKLY WILL FAR SURPASS THE PZPR'S 2 MILLION MEMBERS; MOST EXPECTATIONS ARE FOR SOMEWHERE BETWEEN 4 AND 6 MILLION SOLIDARITY MEMBERS. THESE ARE PEOPLE WHO HAVE BEEN WAITING IN THE WINGS, OR ORGANIZING SECRETLY, AND THEY WILL EMERGE IN NEW LEGAL UNION CHAPTERS VERY RAPIDLY -- CERTAINLY WELL IN TIME FOR THE ELECTION CAMPAIGN. THIS

CONFIDENTIAL

CONFIDENTIAL

PAGE 02 . WARSAW 05247 06 OF 08 191532Z

ENORMOUS GROUP OF VOTERS, THEN, WILL BECOME THE CORE OF AN INCREASINGLY ENTHUSIASTIC PUBLIC WHOSE ONE OVERWHELMING OBJECTIVE IN THE COMING ELECTIONS IS GOING TO BE "THROW THE BUMS OUT|"

18. COMPLIMENTING THE RISING ENTHUSIASM, TALK OF AN ELECTION BOYCOTT HAS SUBSIDED. THE CONFEDERATION FOR AN INDEPENDENT POLAND (KPN), FOR EXAMPLE, IS REPORTED TO BE PREPARING A CANDIDATE LIST COVERING PERHAPS AS MANY AS ONE HUNDRED CONSTITUENCIES. ALTHOUGH WE GIVE THEM LITTLE CHANCE OF SUCCESSFULLY COMPETING (SEE REFTEL C), THEIR ENGAGEMENT IN THE PROCESS WILL BOTH DECREASE THE THREAT OF AN EFFECTIVE BOYCOTT, AND BRING PEOPLE TO THE POLLS WHO CERTAINLY WILL NOT VOTE FOR COMMUNIST CANDIDATES. POSSIBLE CANDIDACIES FROM OTHER INDEPENDENT GROUPS WOULD ACCOMPLISH THE SAME RESULTS, WITH VERY LITTLE LIKELIHOOD THAT SUCH CANDIDATES WILL BE ABLE TO CHALLENGE THE SOLIDARITY-SANCTIONED LIST.

19. AN ITEM OF FOCUS FOR MANY FOREIGN OBSERVERS IN POLAND LATELY HAS BEEN THE REMARKABLE LACK OF EUPHORIA WHICH ONE WOULD HAVE EXPECTED THE VAST ROUND-TABLE ACCOMPLISHMENTS TO GENERATE. COMPARED WITH THE PUBLIC MOOD FOLLOWING THE 1980 SOLIDARITY ACCORDS, THE POPULATION IS DOWNRIGHT SOMBER. BOGDAN LIS HAD AN EXPLANATION OF MANY PARTS FOR THIS PHENOMENON, THE MOST CONVINCING BEING A SENSE OF LACK OF CONTROL. HE SAID THAT THE WORKERS IN 1980 WERE IN DIRECT CONTROL OF EVENTS

CONFIDENTIAL

CONFIDENTIAL

PAGE 03 WARSAW 05247 06 OF 08 191532Z

CONFIDENTIAL

Date Printed: 08/26/1997

DOC_NUMBER: 89WARSAW05247

CHANNEL: n/a

559

AND HAD THE FEELING THAT THEY DEFINED THE RESULTING ACCORDS; IT WAS A MANAGEABLE, TANGIBLE PROCESS. THE ROUND-TABLE PROCESS, OF COURSE, WENT FAR BEYOND THE 1980 EVENTS BOTH IN SCOPE AND COMPLEXITY. ALTHOUGH SOLIDARITY CONTINUES TO MAINTAIN THAT IT IS A UNION, THE DIALOGUE PROCESS IT HAS DIRECTED HAD LITTLE TO DO WITH WORKER PARTICIPATION. THIS DIFFERENCE IN MOOD, REFLECTING THE PROFOUNDLY DIFFERENT POLITICAL PROCESSES THAT HAVE TAKEN PLACE, MUST NOT BE CONFUSED WITH DISINTEREST OR UNCONCERN. ONCE THE TERMS OF THE ROUND-TABLE AGREEMENT ARE WIDELY KNOWN, AND ONCE THE STARK CHOICE PRESENTED BY THE COMING ELECTION IS UNIVERSALLY ADVERTISED, PEOPLE WILL PARTICIPATE, EUPHORIC OR NOT.

20. IT IS IN FACT ON THE ISSUE OF VOTER TURNOUT THAT THE PARTY MUST HANG WHATEVER MEAGER HOPES IT HAS. THE PARTY FAITHFUL -- PERHAPS 25 PERCENT OF THE ELECTORATE -- WILL VOTE. IF DISGRUNTLED OPPOSITIONISTS AND AN EMBITTERED AND DESPONDENT PUBLIC REFUSE TO PARTICIPATE, THE COMPARATIVELY LARGER PARTY VOTE MAY TURN UP A SUCCESSFUL CANDIDATE HERE OR THERE. AN ASSESSMENT OF LIKELY TURNOUT, HOWEVER, MUST BE BASED LITERALLY ON A LEAP OF FAITH. HAVING LONG EVANGELIZED THE GOSPEL OF DEMOCRACY, WE MUST BELIEVE THAT THE FIRST EVER OPPORTUNITY TO VOTE FREELY IN A STARKLY COMPETITIVE ELECTION WILL BE COMPELLING. A FREE ELECTION SHOULD HAVE THE APPEAL OF PROMISED POLITICAL SALVATION. HOW CAN THE POLISH ELECTORATE TURN ITS BACK ON THAT?

CONFIDENTIAL

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CONFIDENTIAL

PAGE 01 WARSAW 05247 07 OF 08 191533Z
ACTION EUR-00

INFO LOG-00 ADS-00 INR-07 SS-00 CIAE-00 EB-00 DODE-00

CONFIDENTIAL

Date Printed: 08/26/1997

DOC_NUMBER: 89WARSAW05247

CHANNEL: n/a

559

H-01	MSC-01	IO-19	NSCE-00	NSAE-00	SSO-00	HA-09
L-03	LAB-04	TRSE-00	PM-10	PA-01	OMB-01	SIL-01
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T-01	/065 W					

-----050023 191556Z /41

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BRUSSELS FOR USEC

E.O. 12356: DECL: OADR
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21. IN THE LAST PARLIAMENTARY ELECTION, IN WHICH COMUNISTS RAN EITHER AGAINST COMMUNISTS OR NO ONE, FOR SEATS IN A PARLIAMENT THAT HAD NO MEANIN, PERHAPS 65 PERCENT OF THE ELECTORATE VOTED. IS IT UNREASONABLE THEN TO ASSUME THAT THERE WILL BE A SIGIFICANTLY GREATER TURNOUT IN THESE EXTRAORDINARY ELECTIONS? WE THINK NOT. AN 85 OR 90 PERCENT TURNOUT SEEMS LIKELY; PERHAPS MORE. ONE OF THE MOST
 CONFIDENTIAL

CONFIDENTIAL

PAGE 02 WARSAW 05247 07 OF 08 191533Z

SKEPTICAL OPPOSITION FIGURES, JACEK CZAPUTOWICZ, WHO STRONGLY CRITICIZED SOLIDARITY'S ANTI-DEMOCRATIC METHODS OF CANDIDATE SELECTION, RECENTLY DECLARED WITHOUT EQUIVOCATION THAT AN 80 PERCENT TURNOUT WOULD GUARANTEE "FOR SURE" 100 PERCENT OF THE SENATE SEATS FOR THE OPPOSITION.

CONSEQUENCES

22. ALTHOUGH THIS MESSAGE IS MEANT TO ESTABLISH SOME EXPECTATIONS FOR EVENTS IN SIX WEEKS TIME, OUR CONCLUSION COMPELS ANOTHER QUESTION. IF THE OPPOSITION DOES WIN NEARLY ALL OF THE

CONFIDENTIAL

Date Printed: 08/26/1997

DOC_NUMBER: 89WARSAW05247

CHANNEL: n/a

559

SENATE SEATS -- IF REYKOWSKI'S "COMPLETE DISASTER" DOES OCCUR -- WHAT ARE THE LIKELY CONSEQUENCES? WE, AND PERHAPS REYKOWSKI ALSO, CANNOT ACCURATELY FORESEE HOW THE PARTY'S CONSERVATIVE OPPOSITION WILL RESPOND. WHETHER THROUGH VAST MISCALCULATION OR WISHFUL THINKING, SUCH AN OVERWHELMING SOLIDARITY VICTORY APPEARS NOT TO HAVE BEEN ANTICIPATED. THE IMPACT OF SUCH AN EVENT WILL THEN BE SHOCKING AS WELL AS UNEQUIVOCAL.

23. INSTEAD OF SOME SORT OF PREEMPTIVE REACTION FROM THE CONSERVATIVES, HOWEVER, WE ASSUME THAT EVENTS WILL BE PERMITTED TO RUN THEIR COURSE. THIS MEANS THAT A SEJM WILL CONVENE, THE ELECTION AND COMPOSITION OF WHICH WILL HAVE BEEN ENTIRELY DISCREDITED BY THE VERY DIFFERENT RESULT IN

CONFIDENTIAL

CONFIDENTIAL

PAGE 03 WARSAW 05247 07 OF 08 191533Z

THE FREE ELECTION TO THE SENATE. THE SEJM WILL HAVE LOST ALL ABILITY TO MAINTAIN THE ILLUSION OF AN AUTHENTIC REPRESENTATIVE LEGISLATIVE BODY. IN THE MEANTIME, AND WITH GREAT CONTRAST, THE OPPOSITION SENATE WILL FORM, ELECT ITS OFFICERS, AND BEGIN DRAWING UP ITS OWN LEGISLATIVE AGENDA. HIGH ON THE LIST, WE EXPECT TO SEE SOME PROPOSALS TO CLARIFY THE AMBIGUOUS ISSUE OF POLITICAL PARTIES, AND THE LATTER WILL BEGIN FORMING IN ANTICIPATION.

24. THE FIRST ACT OF THE COMBINED NATIONAL ASSEMBLY WILL BE TO ELECT THE PRESIDENT. THE PARTY COALITION WILL HAVE PERHAPS 320 VOTES; THE OPPOSITION AS MANY AS 261. GIVEN AN ASSURED VICTORY FOR WOJCIECH JARUZELSKI, WE WONDER HOW MANY OF THE 261 WILL VOTE FOR SOMEONE ELSE, AND HOW A CLEAR DIVISION; COMBINED WITH THE BLATANT ARTIFICIALITY OF THE REGIM

E'S 320

VOTES, WILL AFFECT THE NEW PRESIDENT'S PRESTIGE, AUTHORITY, AND LEGITIMACY.

25. WITH ALL OF POLAND'S PRESSING PROBLEMS, CAN A LEGISLATIVE CRISIS BE LONG DELAYED? AN OPPOSITION SENATE AND A REGIME-DOMINATED SEJM WILL RAPIDLY COME TO AN IMPASSE. TO OVERRIDE A SENATE VETO OF ANY LEGISLATION, THE SEJM WOULD HAVE TO COME UP WITH 320 VOTES. THE PZPR WILL HAVE ONLY 144; TOGETHER WITH ALL OF ITS "COALITION" PARTNERS, INCLUDING THE INCREASINGLY-INDEPENDENT PEASANTS' PARTY, THE DEMOCRATIC PARTY, AND THE INDEPENDENT CATHOLICS, IT WILL HAVE NO

CONFIDENTIAL

Date Printed: 08/26/1997

DOC_NUMBER: 89WARSAW05247

CHANNEL: n/a

559

MORE THAN 319, ALMOST CERTAINLY LESS. WITH
THESE NUMBERS, A LEGISLATIVE AND THEN CONSTITUTIONAL

CONFIDENTIAL

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CONFIDENTIAL

PAGE 01 WARSAW 05247 08 OF 08 191533Z

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INFO	LOG-00	ADS-00	INR-07	SS-00	CIAE-00	EB-00	DODE-00
	H-01	MSC-01	IO-19	NSCE-00	NSAE-00	SSO-00	HA-09
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CRISIS SEEMS LIKELY. AT THIS POINT, THE NEW
SYSTEM BECOMES A THREAT TO STATE INTERESTS, AS
PERCEIVED BY THE REGIME. WHETHER IT WILL BACK
DOWN AS IT HAS AT THE ROUND-TABLE, OR SEEK TO
MODIFY THE TERMS OF THE THREATENING NEW SYSTEM
THROUGH OTHER MEANS, WE CANNOT GUESS.
ONE CERTAINTY IS THAT THE "COORDINATION COM-
MISSION" WILL BECOME AN IMPORTANT MECHANISM

CONFIDENTIAL

Date Printed: 08/26/1997

DOC_NUMBER: 89WARSAW05247

CHANNEL: n/a

559

FOR SEEKING RESOLUTION. IT WILL BE THE EXTRA-
CONSTITUTIONAL LNSTITUTIONAL SUCCESSOR OF THE
CONFIDENTIAL

CONFIDENTIAL

PAGE 02 WARSAW 05247 08 OF 08 191533Z

ROUND-TABLE ITSELF, COMPOSED OF MANY OF THE MAJOR
FIGURES OF THE "MAGDALENKA GROUP." THE COM-
MISSION WILL BE PERHAPS THE REAL POWER CENTER
IN THE NEW SCHEME OF THINGS. HOWEVER IT
FUNCTIONS, IT IS CLEAR THAT THE CHALLENGES
WILL BECOME MORE ACUTE, RATHER THAN LESS, AND
THE APPROACHING ELECTIONS WILL ESTABLISH CON-
DITIONS FORCING ULTIMATE RESOLUTION OF THESE
PROFOUND POWER-SHARING ISSUES. THIS IS EX-
ACTLY THE HISTORICAL PROCESS BRONISLAW GEREMEK,
LECH WALESZA AND THE REST OF SOLIDARITY'S
LEADERSHIP INTENDED TO SET IN MOTION.

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