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OFFICE OF
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MEMORANDUM

Poland Under Gierek

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5 November 1971

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CENTRAL INTELLIGENCE AGENCY

OFFICE OF NATIONAL ESTIMATES

5 November 1971

MEMORANDUM

SUBJECT: Poland Under Gierek*

The new regime of Edward Gierek, which came to power in the midst of the great turmoil of last winter, has taken hold in Poland surprisingly well. It is ready, in fact, to convene a Party Congress -- a major political event in Poland -- early next month. Gierek, somewhat in the manner of Hungary's cautious innovator, Kadar, would apparently like to set Poland off on a new course -- toward a less oppressive political atmosphere; improved living standards; a better deal for the workers; more efficient, less bureaucratic, economic programs; and some restoration of Polish national pride. But the people are restive and skeptical; economic prospects are far from bright; and relations with the USSR -- which is probably apprehensive about Gierek's intentions -- could prove to be increasingly troublesome. Gierek thus has his work cut out for him, and the way ahead looks rough and uncertain.

* *This memorandum was prepared by the Office of National Estimates and coordinated within CIA.*

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SUBJECT: Poland Under Gierek

Problems

1. In less than a year, Poland has lived through major urban riots, bordering on insurrection; has seen the fall of a leadership which was once regarded as virtually irreplaceable and which long enjoyed the special blessings of the USSR; and has survived an interval of great political confusion and uncertainty. Last winter and spring were, in fact, a time of pervasive disarray, both at the top, where the reins of power seemed to lie slackly in several hands, and among the workers, some of whom seemed ready for a time to grasp these reins for themselves.

2. The new leader of the Polish Party, Edward Gierek, can only be counted as an unusually artful and perhaps lucky man. Gomulka's estate was in terrible shape, riddled with debt and disorder and managed by a corps of functionaries dominated by indolence, inertia, and incompetence. Gierek had to find, first of all, some way to tide the country over,

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a quick way to placate seemingly implacable Poles, and then some way to build popular confidence in the government. At the same time he had to head off an economic crisis and to improve the lot of the consumer. And while this was underway, he had to fight to win clear ascendancy within top Party councils and to gain firm control over the Party and government bureaucracies. Moreover, he had to do all this without in the process alarming the Russians, who are, understandably, (a) sensitive about what goes on in Poland, (b) especially so when a new man -- not necessarily their choice -- comes to power, and (c) all the more so when the authority of the Party is challenged and even overwhelmed, as it was along the Baltic coast in December 1970.

3. Gierek has in most respects made a very strong start. By January and February he had persuaded the Soviets that it was in their interest to support him with statements of good will and extensions of credit and hard cash.* By May he had

* *Following Gierek's initial visit to Moscow in early January, the Soviets promised to increase deliveries of grain and cement. A month or so later, when Gierek was facing a second round of strikes, the Kremlin agreed to lend Poland \$100 million in hard currency for the purchase of food and consumer goods in the West and to open a major line of credit -- estimated at over \$1 billion -- to finance imports of grain, gas, and petroleum products from the Bloc.*

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apparently convinced the Polish people that there was a decent chance that he would try to improve their material and political well-being and that he meant it when he promised domestic "renewal" and reform. And by the beginning of the summer -- when his most formidable rival, Mieczyslaw Moczar, was removed from the Secretariat -- it was clear to all that Gierek had become the unquestioned (though certainly not yet all-powerful) boss of the Party and of Poland itself.

4. Gierek, of course, had a number of things going for him. As it turned out, Gomulka -- ultraconservative, ascetic, something of a recluse -- was not a difficult act to follow; to most Poles, almost anybody would have seemed an improvement. In any case, Gierek's reputation, whether entirely deserved or not, had preceded him to Warsaw. He was said to be tough but human; decisive but prudent; a believing but non-doctrinaire Communist. His record as Party chieftain in Katowice (Silesia -- Poland's major industrial province) suggested to many that he was an unusually able administrator and politician, a friend of the workers, and even -- within limits -- a patriotic Pole. He apparently got along well with the military establishment (which sometimes plays an implicit political role, especially during periods of tension), and, indeed, seemed to enjoy the

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respect of many and to be actively disliked by few. As was observed some time ago, he seemed to be, in fact, "the one man [in Poland] who could settle things down in the uncertain aftermath of Gomulka's departure from the scene."*

5. But if Gierek has won most of the initial battles and the renovation of Poland is now underway, he is still far from a decisive victory in a struggle which will surely persist well into this decade. The Polish people are among the most resolute, stubborn, and, in some circumstances, volatile in Eastern Europe. They may admire Gierek, even like him, but they do not yet owe him their loyalty, as they once owed it to Gomulka for presumably saving them from the Russians. Nor do they respect or trust the institution Gierek commands or care for Gierek's comrades in Moscow. Before wholeheartedly signing up for Gierek's cause, they will thus await tangible benefits, mostly material, but also political -- including movement toward a restoration of national pride.

6. And with or without popular support, Gierek must deal with and through many old-line Party and government functionaries



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who are unhappy about him and apprehensive about his program. He must also face a variety of special interest groups, which will push in diverse and conflicting ways and probably with renewed energy while the nation is in a state of flux. And he still must contend with the Russians, at least some of whom must be suspicious of both his methods and his ultimate intentions. In any event, Poland's political and economic problems are deep-seated and serious, and Gierek has not as yet demonstrated a capacity to solve them in any fundamental way. Gierek, for all his successes to date, thus remains in a real sense on probation, and the way ahead is both rough and uncertain.

Remedies

7. Gierek did start off on the right foot. He stepped into office last December in the midst of the country's most severe crisis since 1956, and his initial moves were all the proper ones. He acted immediately and effectively to restore order in the north and to assure calm elsewhere. Checking whatever vengeful impulses he or others may have felt, he gave much to the protesters without giving in. And though there

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were moments when state authority seemed in some areas to be on the verge of tottering, Gierek's methods worked.

8. Gierek began by reversing the Gomulka regime's condemnation of the disorders, declaring them to have been the expressions of legitimate working-class grievances. He blamed the conditions which led to these grievances on his predecessor, and promised to give the Polish people a new deal -- better living standards, a more democratic style of leadership, and a larger role in the formulation of policy. Specifically, he raised incomes for the poorest families, froze food prices for two years, abandoned Gomulka's unpopular system of wage incentives, and promised improvements in supplies of consumer goods, food (especially meat), and housing. Later, as a consequence of new Soviet credits, he was able to rescind the price increases on food, fuel, and rent which had been announced by the Gomulka regime and which had triggered the demonstrations in December. Finally, turning to the problem of agricultural production, he moved to win the confidence of the private peasants (who occupy 85 percent of Poland's arable land), raising certain procurement prices and announcing that in January compulsory deliveries will be abolished and that tax laws will be revised to encourage the expansion of private holdings.

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9. The Gierak regime unveiled its revised 1971-1975 economic plan in June. It is consumer oriented, though not overwhelmingly so, and its goals are ambitious. National Product is to rise at an annual rate of 6.6 to 6.8 percent (compared to roughly 6 percent from 1961 to 1970). Personal consumption is to rise by at least as much, and social services are to be greatly increased. The rate of increase in agricultural production and in real wages is to double over the previous five-year period. A high level of investment is to be maintained, with significant increases slated for industry (particularly light industry), housing, and agriculture. And foreign trade is to grow more rapidly than was originally planned.

10. By October, the regime could claim that prices had been stabilized, that the supply of consumer goods had much improved and that real wages would rise some 5 percent this year. Though official pronouncements appear too optimistic, there is little question that circumstances are better and that the people, if not content, are at least willing to give the new leadership the benefit of the doubt.

11. The regime's new style has not been confined to the economy. The leadership is trying hard to convince the people

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that, quite unlike the Gomulka crowd, it wants to stay in touch with the needs and aspirations of all the citizenry. Party and government leaders have held innumerable meetings with workers and other groups throughout the country, seeking to demonstrate that there is now open and direct contact between the rulers and the ruled. High-ranking officials respond on television to questions submitted -- both in advance and while the program is on the air -- by the listening audience. A new post of government spokesman has been created to publicize and explain the activities of the cabinet. The results of meetings of the Politburo and Central Committee, now more frequent, are regularly published. And the appearance of frank and mildly provocative articles is now tolerated, and in some cases encouraged, in the public press.

12. More important may be the regime's acceptance of the concept -- first advanced by Kadar -- that "all who are not against us are with us". Gierek has repeatedly expressed his determination to eliminate discriminatory distinctions based on an individual's class, political affiliation, or religious beliefs. And he has moved to conciliate the Roman Catholic Church, giving it title to its properties in former German

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territories, having his prime minister meet with Cardinal Wyszynski (the first such Church-State "summit conference" in eight years), and opening direct talks with the Vatican.

13. Gierek, again like Kadar, has also moved in modest ways to give the general public a sense of greater participation in the political process. He wishes the Sejm (parliament) to play a larger and more visible role, plans to prod local governments into greater activity, and wants the two non-Marxist political parties to demonstrate a small measure of independence. He also wants the National Unity Front (a conglomerate of various tame political and social organizations) to rejuvenate itself and to behave as if it were a real and representative force in Polish life. Potentially more important, he has promised to take steps to increase the role of workers in trade unions, the Party, and the various mass organizations; has said that workers will be given much more say-so in the decisions of management; and has ordered the drafting of a new labor code to protect and expand worker's rights and benefits.

14. The Party itself has not been neglected. Gierek is seeking, in fact, to divorce the Party from day-to-day management of political and economic affairs. He seems to believe

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that the Party should monitor and mobilize, persuade and pressure, and formulate policy guidelines (drawing heavily on both Party and non-Party expertise). But, without prejudice to the Party's ultimate power to intervene, the practical implementation of policy is to be left to the appropriate government and mass organizations.

15. Gierek hopes at the same time to reinvigorate the Party, partly by encouraging freer debate within its own councils and by expanding the authority (and improving the morale) of its lower echelons. He also hopes to strengthen it -- and, by no means coincidentally, to consolidate his own position -- through extensive pruning and shifts of key personnel. He has carried out a considerable shake-up of the top leadership. Over half of the 12-man Gomulka Politburo has been removed, and 11 of the 19 provincial Party First Secretaries who were in the scene in December 1970 have been replaced. Several other Politburo holdovers may lose their jobs at the 6th Party Congress in December, and a number of the remaining eight provincial holdovers may be eased out before the end of the year. A substantial number of lesser officials have also lost their jobs, and the newly reconstituted provincial and district Party executives recently launched a quiet purge of the rank-and-file membership.

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Prospects

16. It is not yet possible to say with certainty whether Gierek's programs and promises are heavy with solid content or are simply a convincing cosmetic shell. The worker protests last December frightened the Party leaders, demonstrated to them that Gomulka's methods and attitudes were deficient and dangerous, and persuaded most of them that the Gomulka regime was no longer competent to rule. Changes in style were obviously necessary, and it was clear that some means other than simple coercion would be needed to head off a catastrophe. But it is not easy to distinguish between the new regime's emergency tactics and its long-range intentions. The Polish people themselves find it difficult to make the distinction. A skeptical witticism is going the rounds in Warsaw: "Are there any differences between Gierek's Poland and Gomulka's Poland? None, but Gierek is the only one who doesn't know it yet."

17. Although Gierek has unquestionably changed the political climate of Poland, he has been living to a large extent on his promises to the people and his credits from the Soviets. This state of affairs obviously cannot continue indefinitely, and there are those who predict that for the sake of these credits (and

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for the sake of his and the Party's authority) Gierek will be willing to go back on many of his promises. This was pretty much the route followed by Gomulka after his bright start in 1956, and it is true that there are already signs of some back-sliding. Recurrent complaints indicate that, despite an extensive shuffling of the trade union hierarchy and a lot of loud self-criticism from the remaining union officials, little improvement has been noted by workers at the factory level. The pace of change in other areas -- e.g., in education, cultural affairs, and youth activities -- has also been slow and uneven. Some of the more radical proposals which appeared in the wake of Gomulka's dismissal -- such as specified limits on tenure in high office -- have virtually disappeared from public discussion. And a tougher and more orthodox line on a variety of issues -- Party and labor discipline, the limits of debate in the press, and vigilance against foreign and domestic "anti-socialist forces" -- has begun to emerge in official statements.

18. Still, the record suggests that Gierek's gruff populism is not merely a pose. Indeed, the East European who most closely resembles Gierek in terms of policies and intent, though not in temperament, may be Janos Kadar. Both men apparently proceed from a conviction that the first order of political business is

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to assure public order and the general leadership of the Party. But they believe that it is then necessary to overcome popular apathy and opposition and to draw the citizenry into a form of active cooperation with the regime. This, in turn, prompts a search for the means to boost individual economic incentives and living standards in general and ways to give elements of the population a meaningful stake and even a role in the conduct of national and local affairs. It encourages an attitude of official tolerance and precludes in most instances harsh official repression. It also permits some freedom of expression in private circles and a measure of candor in the media. And, finally, in potentially the most delicate area of all, it allows the appearance of some of the trappings and a hint of the substance of purely national pride and purpose.

19. Gierek sought early on to demonstrate his concern for Poland's great heritage. He approved the costly rebuilding of the ancient royal castle in Warsaw, a prime symbol of the nation's glorious past; encouraged the display of the Polish national symbol, the white eagle; and substantially muted ideological themes during national day celebrations in May. More significantly, presumably at Gierek's behest, the Central Committee of the Polish Party has declared itself on the issue

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of Polish patriotism in language which is both striking and bold -- more so, in fact, than anything yet put forward by the Hungarian Party:

The noblest aspirations of all Poles revolve around the strengthening of the international stature of the Homeland. Concern for the nation's dignity, responsibility for its destiny, the development of a sovereign Poland, and the strength and welfare of the state represent the essence of contemporary patriotism.*

20. Gierek probably conceives of himself as a loyal son of Poland. He might indeed welcome a considerable loosening of Poland's close ties to the Soviet Union, and, partly as a means of accomplishing this, favor closer relations with the Western states. Poland is in any case an ardent proponent of European detente, and of a European security conference, perhaps for political reasons vis-a-vis the USSR as for more obvious economic reasons. But Gierek is by all accounts a flexible, realistic, and ambitious man. He does not seem to share the intense feelings of, say, a hard-boiled, anti-Soviet patriot like Ceausescu or of a malleable, idealistic one like Imre Nagy. It does not seem likely then that Gierek would knowingly endanger his country's future for the sake of its independence,

* *From the Guidelines for the 6th Party Congress, adopted by the Central Committee on 4 September 1971.*

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in the manner of Ceausescu, or seriously risk his own political future for much the same reason, in the manner of Nagy. It may be, though, that once again some of his inspiration comes from Kadar.

21. But whether Gierek can successfully apply the Kadar approach to Poland and to Poland's relations with the USSR is, of course, a principal question. In some ways, Gierek's task should be the easier. Kadar started with almost nothing in the way of domestic political resources and precious few economic assets. But for Kadar, almost the only way open was up. He had vigorous Soviet support -- both guns and butter -- and he dealt with a people who were ready to respond to small favors. He was not, as it developed, a mere Quisling or a Rakosi-like brute, and for this the Hungarians in due time were grateful.

22. Gierek, on the other hand, may not find it so easy to win the USSR's confidence or the public's gratitude. He was not Moscow's handpicked man, nor did he replace someone the Soviets considered a traitor. Moreover, since Polish resources are not now in total disarray, Gierek may find it difficult to convince the Soviets that they must continue to

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provide generous assistance to the Polish economy indefinitely. Finally, Soviet troops did not traumatize the Polish people by shooting up the coastal cities in December: the Hungarians of 1956 were stunned and depressed; the Poles of today are alert and expectant. In some ways, then, Gierek may find his job tougher than Kadar's -- the Soviets more suspicious, his people more impatient, and his economy harder to operate on.

23. Actually, of all Poland's problems, the economic could in time prove the most intractable. Poland is a poor country. It was devastated by the war, exploited by the Russians, exhausted by the Stalinists, and then mismanaged by the Gomulkaites. In terms of per capita income it ranks far behind all its neighbors, including the USSR, is not so well off as Hungary, and does only a very little bit better than Bulgaria.* The Gomulka regime's approach to the economy was austere, bureaucratic, inefficient and doctrinaire. Its concern for the welfare (and the morale) of the workers was shockingly small, especially in view of the Poznan riots of 1955 and Gomulka's own experiences

* *Poland's 1970 per capita income was \$1,330; the USSR's near \$2,000; Czechoslovakia's and East Germany's around \$2,100; Hungary's \$1,450; Bulgaria's \$1,300; and Romania's -- the lowest in Bloc Eastern Europe -- \$1,140. (All figures from the NIS.)*

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with public spontaneity in 1956. Real wages rose by an annual average of only 1.7 percent during the 1960s, according to official statistics. Bad harvests and bad management produced major food shortages in 1970. And belated efforts to do something about these problems, including sagging rates of overall annual growth, had only made matters worse.

24. So far, improvements in the economy under Gierak probably owe at least as much to increases in imports and concessions made possible by Bloc credits as to actual progress in domestic economic performance. And future progress seems to depend heavily on more effective exploitation of existing resources, i.e., on a sort of Khrushchevian effort to make use of so-called hidden reserves (i.e., potential economic assets, such as the ability of men to work harder and more efficiently, the possibility of reducing wastage and increasing the productivity of investments, the prospect of improving agricultural yields through better techniques, etc.). This is hardly the surest way to advance economically, not because the resources aren't there but because there are usually good (and complex) reasons why they have remained hidden.

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25. Gierek's plans for economic reform remain vague. He and his advisers apparently have not as yet made up their minds about structural changes, incentive systems, management techniques, and the like. The regime, however, is full of honorable and ambitious intentions, and there are signs that it would like to borrow further from the Hungarian model, which is itself a pallid but fairly effective imitation of aspects of the Yugoslav experiment. Poland may thus be heading toward a system which will permit some decentralization of economic decision-making and will make some allowances for the play of market forces. In these circumstances, the Party would continue to make basic policy and prescribe general goals, but presumably the economy, relieved of artificial restraints and bureaucratic bumbling, would otherwise be free to take off on its own.

26. But to meet its long-term economic objectives (some specified, some only implied) the Gierek regime needs more than honorable intentions and partial reform. It probably needs, in effect, a turn of fate: an enthusiastic working force, enterprising farmers, efficient managers, imports of Western technology, Soviet aid and raw materials, good weather, and consummate good luck. But Polish workers are not German workers, Polish peasants do not live in the future, and Polish managers do not

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have Harvard M.B.A.'s. Western technology, moreover, is expensive and hard to apply, Soviet aid has strings attached, and weather and luck belong to not always merciful gods.

27. Even if, somehow, all the targets of the new five-year plan are met, the Gierek regime could still be in trouble. Its long-term political future surely rests in large degree upon its ability to provide palpable improvements in standards of living, and here prospects are dubious. Existing goals for construction and light industry, for example, seem inadequate to do much to relieve the housing shortage or to improve the quality and quantity of consumer goods. Further shifts in investment would be beneficial but -- unless defense expenditures are reduced* -- might hurt other important sectors of the economy. A rising level of exports to the West would help, but this would require the production of finished goods which would be -- for the first time -- competitive in a very tough market. Western investment -- of the sort Yugoslavia, Romania, and Hungary are seeking and Gierek says he would welcome -- would also be of some assistance,

* *Polish defense expenditures have been rising steadily and significantly since 1965 in absolute terms and as a percentage of the total budget (over 9 percent in 1970) and of GNP (about 4 1/2 percent in 1970).*

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but it is very hard to obtain in substantial amounts; opportunities for profit are limited, and the kind of terms usually imposed by Communist governments are not likely to be very attractive. It is easy to see why, even by Gierek's own calculations, significant basic improvements in Poland's economic situation cannot be expected until sometime after 1975.

28. It thus may be that Gierek, whatever his intentions, will face some very hard choices in the years ahead, of the sort Kadar has so far been able to avoid. Shortfalls in the economy would hurt Gierek with the workers -- who have already demonstrated awesome reserves of power -- and with the people at large. They would also hurt him within the Party, both among the young and ambitious technocrats, who now give him their conditional support, and the old-line hacks, who no doubt yearn for the comforts of the past. Factionalism is, in any case, no stranger to the Polish Party.

29. Gierek, like Gomulka before him, could thus find himself losing both his popular base and his ability to count on his colleagues to carry out his policies. In these circumstances, with his cautious pragmatism no longer a sure guide, he might be tempted to turn off in one of two diverging directions: toward

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policies of concession and innovation, designed to win public loyalty and support and to provide radical solutions to economic problems; or toward the politics of repression and reaction. Whatever his choice, calculations of Soviet reactions would of course be central to his decision.

Poles and Russians

30. The Soviets have so far been quite sensible about their relations with Poland. They did not try to intervene to save Gomulka; they did not attempt to tell the Gierek regime how to handle its problems with the workers; and they did not simply sit around to see how the new regime would work out -- they provided immediate support. And so far, Moscow would seem to have had little reason for complaint. Gierek must seem to have handled the emergency with dash and competence, and he seems on the whole to want to avoid any quarrels with the USSR. Still, the Russians are especially sensitive about what goes on in Poland and bear little love for the Poles. They must have some reservations about Gierek -- his style and his basic loyalties. And above all, they must find worrisome the emerging revival of Polish national pride.

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31. Current expressions of nativist sentiments in Poland may only be a political device, intended by the regime mainly to reassure or win over a doubtful citizenry. But the Russians cannot be sure of this, and they are certainly well aware that nationalism in Poland is traditionally anti-Russian, and has a history of getting out of hand. They may, in fact, be much less impressed with the Gierak regime's regular and ritualistic protestations of fealty than with its fairly frequent appeals to Polish patriotism. The Russians can complain about this -- perhaps already have -- but the issue is delicate and cannot be resolved by Moscow with a simple set of orders.

32. And there may be other, more general reasons why Moscow might now be somewhat apprehensive about Poland's future position in the Bloc. As demonstrated anew in 1968 in Czechoslovakia, the USSR's hold on its East European allies still rests in the last analysis on its military power. But this ultimate authority does not of itself assure conformity because of the strong inhibitions on its use. It may be that Poland could not get away with a degree of independence comparable to that enjoyed by Romania; Poland would seem a great deal more vital to Soviet interests. But the urge to sovereignty is at least as strong

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in Poland as elsewhere, and its expression may be encouraged in the period ahead by Soviet policies elsewhere in Europe.

33. The USSR's activities in Western Europe, especially the cultivation of much improved relations with West Germany, are likely in fact to encourage Polish interest in closer ties to the West. They should at the same time reduce the amount of leverage the USSR can exercise in Warsaw as the protector of Poland's interests vis-a-vis West German "imperialism". Moreover, Poland's strategic importance to the USSR -- which has helped in the past to convince the Poles that they should be compliant -- could also work to Warsaw's advantage. Assuming Russian reluctance to resort to force, the Poles have some bargaining power; the Soviets might find it prudent to appease the Poles rather than to accept the penalties and uncertainties of tension and hostility.

34. At the moment Gierk and his friends seem to be less interested in international problems than their predecessors. "Socialist foreign policy", according to one expression of the regime's view, "is expressed less in diplomatic acts than in the effectiveness of the solutions of internal problems". The Party Guidelines, it is said, point out "the obvious fact that

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foreign policy is subordinated to internal policy". Perhaps the Russians will interpret this peculiar formula -- which has not been openly expressed anywhere else in the Bloc -- to mean only that the Poles are so wrapped up in their own problems that they cannot imagine making any troubles for the USSR abroad. But interpreted literally, it means that Warsaw sees its relationship with the USSR only in terms of what it can do for Poland. Even a loose reading suggests that the Poles will be less than fervid in their support of Soviet foreign policy goals, especially those which demand tangible Polish contributions and which thus threaten to impinge on internal Polish development.

35. In a more immediate sense, the Soviets must be disturbed by the speed and extent of Gierek's campaign to rid the Polish Party of old timers who were known quantities and who were comfortable with the Soviet-Polish status quo. The renovation of the top Polish leadership has gone much farther than any other aspects of Gierek's program of renewal. To the Soviets, this must appear incautious, even ominous. The attitudes of the new men Gierek is putting into power are probably not very clear, especially their attitudes toward the Soviet Union.

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36. The Soviets may also be apprehensive about Gierek's apparent lack of concern for ideology and uncertain about the degree of his devotion to first (i.e., Soviet) principles. Gierek is no Dubcek and certainly he is not promoting or likely to tolerate an atmosphere in Warsaw comparable to the Prague Spring. But much of the Gierek program emphasizes what has been called "socialism with a human face", which some Russians probably suspect to be merely a euphemism for socialism with an anti-Soviet face. And while the Soviets may not be at all alarmed as yet by Gierek's economic plans and have so far tolerated the Hungarian experiment, they have not themselves been willing to try real reforms -- they feel, among other things, that the Party *must* not let control of the economy slip from its hands, for the sake of the Party if not the economy.

37. The cumulative effect of all this -- the plans and concepts and character of the new regime in Poland -- must arch Stalinist eyebrows in Moscow and raise suspicions among the orthodox everywhere. Where, the Russians must ask (remembering Yugoslavia and still feeling the pain of Czechoslovakia) will it all end? Which of Gierek's declarations will prove ultimately to have been the least meaningful -- those dealing with socialist internationalism and the leading role of the Party,

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or those emphasizing national patriotism and the rights of all Poles? And what would it do to the remaining loyal states or to the USSR itself if Poland -- by far the largest of the USSR's client states in Eastern Europe -- began in earnest to follow its own road to socialism?

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