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Poland Frees a U.N. Worker Convicted of Spying

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WARSAW, Feb. 20 — A Polish United Nations employee convicted of spying was released today after serving more than four years of a seven-year prison term.

The release of the employee, Alicja Wesolowska, appeared to be a goodwill gesture by the Polish Government during the visit of Secretary General Javier Pérez de Cuéllar, who has been meeting with Poland's top leaders, including Prime Minister Wojciech Jarużelski, to discuss the case.

"I am just happy to be with my parents at last," Miss Wesolowska said in a telephone interview tonight. "I think

they have suffered more than I during this ordeal."

Miss Wesolowska said she had been released at 10:30 A.M. from a prison in western Poland. She said she took her parents by surprise when she arrived in her hometown of Torun in north central Poland early this evening.

Arrested in August 1979

Miss Wesolowska, 39 years old, was arrested in August 1979, when she returned to Poland to visit her parents while en route to Ulan Bator to take up a post as a secretary with the United Nations development program office there. In March 1980 she was sentenced at a closed trial in a military court to seven years for spying for an unnamed "NATO power." At the time officials in Warsaw said privately that she worked for the Central Intelligence Agency.

Among the charges believed to have been lodged against her was that of giving parties at her New York East Side apartment so that C.I.A. agents could mingle with third-world diplomats.

Her case became a cause célèbre for other United Nations employees who said that the charges were trumped up and proved the United Nations' inability to protect employees who have fallen into disfavor back home. At the time of her arrest, she was traveling on United Nations papers as well as her Polish passport.

In a recent interview Miss Wesolowska's father said she had gone to Florida in the early 1970's to visit a pen pal and decided to stay. Eventually, he said, her pen pal's brother helped her get a job as a tour guide at the United Nations, where she later became a secretary.

During her years at the United Nations she was shunned by other Polish Secretariat workers, as well as by Polish diplomats because she was not "one of them," according to her father.

Secretary General's First Stop

Miss Wesolowska's release came after years of negotiations by United Nations officials to have her freed, and is believed to be largely the work of Mr. Pérez de Cuéllar. At a news conference

earlier today, the Secretary General did not say that she had been freed, only that he had received "a very encouraging response" from Polish officials during talks on the matter.

This was Mr. Pérez de Cuéllar's first stop on a swing through Eastern Europe. On Tuesday he is to travel to Czechoslovakia and is also scheduled to visit Hungary and Bulgaria.

Miss Wesolowska said she received a telephone call from the Secretary General tonight, congratulating her on her release. She said she did not know if the Polish authorities would allow her to return to her United Nations post. Since June 1980 she has been on special leave without pay.

"For the moment, everybody is just happy that I am out," she said. "The future is not definite."

She said her release papers said she had been given clemency and that she believed that it was an unconditional one. She also said she had been told to report to the local militia office in Torun within three days.

Asked if she still denied the charges against her, Miss Wesolowska said, "Of course."