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U.S. denies Polish claim it allowed Solidarity arrests by keeping silent

By Bill Kritzberg
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The State Department yesterday dismissed Poland's claim that the Reagan administration allowed the martial law suppression of the Solidarity movement to take place by failing to go public with advance information received from a CIA mole in Poland's army.

A State Department spokesman said the charges were "trumped-up" to divert blame from the real culprit, Poland.

Polish spokesman Jerzy Urban told UPI and the Washington Post the spy had informed the United States about the martial law plan a month before it was imposed. Alerted by the mole's subsequent disappearance, the Warsaw government suspected that the Americans had advance knowledge and waited for them to divulge it, said Mr. Urban.

But Washington never spoke up. Solidarity was never alerted and thousands of its members were arrested the night martial law was imposed Dec. 13, 1981.

Washington's decision to keep quiet about the plan "constituted a sort of reticent go-ahead on their part," Mr. Urban told UPI. He said Washington knew the martial law plans by Nov. 6 that year.

A State Department spokesman refused comment on the story of the CIA mole, saying it was an "intelligence matter." He said the United States "had no definitive information" that martial law would be imposed.

He called Mr. Urban's version "a self-serving attempt to lay the blame for martial law in Poland somewhere else than where it belongs, that is with the Polish government."

The spokesman also noted that Mr. Urban's statement acknowledged "that the Polish authorities had laid plans for martial law months in advance, compiling lists of the thousands of Solidarity leaders to be arrested.

"He points out Soviet complicity in planning martial law. Such admissions are more damaging to the reputation of the Polish government than any trumped-up charges that Urban has leveled at the United States."

The department statement, read by

the spokesman, said that during the "confused" months leading up to martial law, "We were well aware of the possibility of imposition of martial law, but had no definitive information as to whether or when such a step might actually be taken."

In the absence of definitive word on what would happen, the statement said, "our objective was to convince the Polish government to work out a solution with Solidarity."

"The United States was aware of the Polish situation," Mr. Urban said in a telephone conversation with UPI referring to the possibility of Soviet intervention at the time to quash Solidarity.

As Solidarity grew in strength through 1981, the Soviet Union had repeatedly warned of intervention to restore order in Poland, but Poland's own imposition of martial law warded off such a direct Soviet intervention.

Mr. Urban named the CIA spy as Wladyslaw Kuklinski, a colonel on the general staff with responsibility for "general conception" of the martial law plan. The Washington Post also identified the CIA plant as Col. Wladyslaw Kuklinski, saying he was a "mole" for the CIA who smuggled the plans to the United States.

Mr. Urban said Mr. Kuklinski had "disappeared" from Warsaw by the time security services became suspicious. His home and the farms of his two sons were deserted and the whole family had left the country by Nov. 6, 1981.

Mr. Urban said that when the Kuklinskis were withdrawn from Poland, the authorities thought the Americans would announce he had gone to the United States and that they would announce the plans and warn Solidarity and the Catholic Church.

"That of course would have made the imposition of martial law impossible," Mr. Urban said.

"We waited and waited, and they never announced the plans. We then came to the conclusion that they decided to be discreet.

"Owing to this, we were able to impose martial law," he said.

Asked whether he meant the U.S. government had indirectly helped the Polish government impose martial law, Mr. Urban replied, "I would say it was a sort of a reticent permission on their part.

"Later we listened with surprise to the voices of condemnation and everything that followed in the U.S. reaction."