POLAND: Students Clash With Police

Students clashed with police in Gdansk on Saturday, while West Europeans were showing strong official but only lukewarm mass support for Solidarity Day. Despite the harsh weather, prospects for the winter grain crop are good. ▮

The Polish radio reported yesterday that demonstrations outside the Lenin Shipyard and in the city center resulted in injuries to 14 people, including 8 police officers, and the arrest of over 200 demonstrators, primarily university and high school students. ▮ ▮▮▮▮▮▮▮▮▮▮ who recently visited Gdansk reported rumors that protests against price increases would take place today at the shipyard. ▮

Comment: The official report blamed US propaganda for inspiring the youths, suggesting that they were attempting to join the international commemoration of "Solidarity Day," rather than protesting against the impending price hikes. The most likely place for such a demonstration would be at the monument to the workers killed in 1970, which is in front of the shipyard. ▮
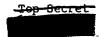
The regime is clearly worried that such demonstrations could be the catalyst for widespread protests, so it has moved quickly to clamp down in Gdansk. Summary criminal proceedings have already begun against the alleged organizers, the curfew has been extended, telephone lines disconnected, and private movement sharply curtailed. ▮

This is apparently the first major violent incident since the clash last December between security forces and miners in Silesia which left at least seven miners dead. It is further evidence that the Baltic coast and Silesia remain trouble spots for the authorities, and they will be very cautious about lifting martial law restrictions there. ▮

Meanwhile, ▮▮▮▮▮▮▮▮▮▮▮▮▮▮ claim that Solidarity leader Walesa is now officially interned, ending his previous indeterminate status. If true, this is a mark of the regime's exasperation at its lack of progress in dealing with the union leader. ▮

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Reactions to Solidarity Day

Pope John Paul II expressed gratitude for demonstrations in support of Poland, and Western leaders participating in the Solidarity Day broadcast were united in calling for an end to martial law, freedom for detainees, and talks among the government, the Church, and Solidarity.
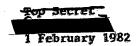
Polish and Soviet media condemned the "Let Poland Be Poland" broadcast as "interference in Poland's internal affairs" and derided it as having a "Hollywood" veneer. A senior Soviet expert on Western affairs contended in an interview that the broadcast was intended to arouse "distrust of the (Polish) government" and "disturbance of tranquillity in that country."
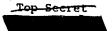
While criticizing alleged US efforts at "telesabotage," the Soviets will seek to exploit criticism by some West Europeans that the presence of a number of show business personalities devalued the Solidarity Day broadcast. The Polish Government probably also hopes that the effects of Solidarity Day can be reduced if Foreign Minister Czyrek--now in France at the invitation of the French Communist Party to attend its national congress--is able to meet Foreign Minister Cheysson. Warsaw would use such a meeting to show that diplomatic relations are proceeding as usual despite Solidarity Day and Western attacks on the regime.

Grain Prospects Good

nearly 5 million hectares of winter grains were sown last fall, an increase of more than 12 percent over 1980. Crop development prior to dormancy was excellent, and the

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protective snowcover has so far prevented any significant winterkill. Although recent flooding in northern Poland destroyed some winter grainfields, most of the crop was left untouched.

    Comment: the current outlook for Poland's 1982 winter grain crop-- about 60 percent of total grain production--is generally good. A rapid melt of the accumulation of heavy snow, however, could lead to additional flood damage. In any event, private farmers--who produce over 75 percent of the grain crop--still must be willing to sell grain to the state if the regime is to meet basic food needs.