

~~Top Secret~~

POLAND: Government Announces Walesa's Release

*The announcement yesterday of former union leader Walesa's impending release reflects increased regime self-confidence following Solidarity's failure to mount any significant strikes on Wednesday and increases the chances that martial law formally will be lifted before the end of the year.*

A Polish press spokesman told [redacted] that Walesa no longer poses a threat to Poland's internal stability. The government also released a letter Walesa sent to Premier Jaruzelski on Monday in which the former leader of Solidarity said it is time "for accord" and proposed the two meet to discuss "subjects of mutual interest."

Walesa's wife privately expressed concern [redacted] about her husband's health--including her suspicion that he had been drugged. She also said that "Leszek and I want to leave Poland."

Solidarity's call for strikes on Wednesday went largely unheeded. Workers said that regime pressure had been too great. Demonstrations on Wednesday were smaller than those in August or May.

More demonstrations in Warsaw yesterday were somewhat larger but were easily controlled. The press spokesman said that the failure of the strike call paves the way for the lifting of martial law by the end of the year.

Comment: The regime's decision to release Walesa seems an effort to capitalize on its victory on Wednesday by showing that it is no longer afraid of the former Solidarity leader. Jaruzelski is probably willing to meet with Walesa hoping that such a meeting would erode the union leader's credibility. The authorities might also calculate that Walesa would prove receptive to Jaruzelski's overtures because he would not have his advisers present--something he has previously demanded.

The authorities realize that Walesa remains a serious threat and undoubtedly have set stiff conditions regarding his activities. He clearly will not be a free man as long as he remains in Poland. The regime obviously would like him to emigrate and may already have extracted a promise from his wife.

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